

Title: Slytherin's Last Descendant

Rated: M (for safety)

Summary: What if there was another?

Warning/s: Story contains violence and sex scenes and sexual references. If you do not like, then please do not read and complain later.

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Prologue

The atmosphere in the small, run-down pub was questionable. Many of the people here spent their time drinking and talking about all the rumours and gossip that went around the small village.

Tonight the conversation had once again turned to the Riddle family, who once lived in this village. The pub was The Hanged Man and many of the people here were locals. Not many people from the outside came here. It wasn't the greatest place to be.

The conversation dropped for a moment while the barman poured a drink for another customer and wiped his hands on a small, dirty rag.

'Well,' he said pausing slightly. 'I once heard that there was another one.'

He was now taking the conversation into a new direction. Everyone in here had talked about the Riddles before but this had never once been said before. The barman's statement caused silence as a few more heads to turn and look at him.

'What are you talking 'bout?' an elderly woman asked.

'Well,' the barman repeated. 'I've heard a few things. I heard the Riddle family have another child, or grandchild, some are saying.'

The mood in the room changed again. 'And who did this other person here it from?'

A few people then turned to see who was talking now. He was someone who hadn't been here before. He was looking for information too but he could actually do something about it, if the rumours turned out to be true. The person was sitting in the corner. His face was covered by shadow and he wasn't drinking anything. The locals were curious by the new person.

'Who are you, stranger?' the barman asked gruffly.

The man in the corner wasn't a shy person. He stood up from where he was sitting and he moved from the shadows. He was quite elderly. He made his way over to the bar and it was apparent that the locals had never seen anyone like him before. He was dressed very differently to them. He was wearing long, violet coloured robes with a bright silver belt around his waist.

The man was tall, with white hair and a white beard and his bright blue eyes twinkled behind his half-moon spectacles. He smiled politely at the people who were still watching him. He sat himself down. It was true; he could admit that he was dressed differently. The only person who seemed to have noticed nothing unusual was the elderly woman.

The man looked everyone over before he said anything. With the way he was acting, it was like he was the normal one and it was everyone else that was strange. His blue eyes then searched the room. He wanted to double check that he was safe and that no-one was staring in a different way.

'I am Albus, my good sir,' he said kindly. 'And I have heard these rumours myself. I have come to see if there is any truth to them.'

The barman seemed satisfied with Albus' answer and he continued with his work and another man spoke up. 'Well, I heard that the child was in an orphanage in Bristol but not sure if it's true though.'

Hearing this made Albus very interested indeed. He turned all of his attention to this new person in the conversation. 'May I enquire as to where you heard this information?' asked Albus politely.

The man seemed to have had too much to drink. His hand slipped off the glass for a second before he could fully control himself again. 'Mmm, yes, a lovely chap who works at the bar a few villages away told me. The rumour began there I believe.'

Albus peered down his nose at the man, who was now taking another long sip of his drink. He stood up from his seat and he moved closer to this other man. 'Do you have a name?' Albus asked.

'Yes, I am Herbert, my good fellow,' he said happily. He took another sip of his drink and he coughed slightly.

The barman walked over to them and he handed Albus a drink. Albus nodded his thanks and he took a small sip from it. It would have been rude not to.

'So, Herbert, tell me about this barman and his pub,' Albus said.

Herbert smiled and he gladly told Albus a long-winded tale about his time at the other bar. When Albus finally got to leave he walked to a small, dark area and with nothing more than a thought, he vanished into thin air.

The next night, Albus made his way to the pub he was told about, which was actually several villages away and in a better part of the country. The pub wasn't much better looking on the outside but once Albus was inside he noticed the difference. The inside was much better; the air smelt cleaner and the locals appeared friendlier. He walked to the bar area immediately and waited. He looked around; there weren't too many people in here.

After a few minutes of waiting, a good-looking, middle-aged woman walked out from a back room. Her eyes instantly found Albus waiting there and she smiled as she walked over and stood opposite him.

'Evening, what can I get ya?' she asked in a casual tone.

Albus returned her smile. 'I'll have a sherry, please,' he said gently.

She smiled a little more and she quickly got him his drink. Albus studied her. In appearance she was quite striking, she would be noticed anywhere. Her long, red hair reached her lower back easily and her grey eyes were warm and kind. Her lips were soft pale pink and her skin was clear and pale, like a porcelain doll. As Albus looked at her though, he felt that something wasn't right. There was something about her.

'What's your name, my dear?' Albus asked. For the moment he just wanted to make some general conversation.

The woman began to wipe some glasses clean and replace them around the bar. She didn't seem to mind talking though. 'I'm Isabelle Baylon,' she replied. 'What about you?'

'I am Albus Dumbledore,' he replied. 'This is your bar?'

Isabelle nodded and continued her cleaning. 'Yep, sure is. It first belonged to my grandfather, and then my father and just before he died he asked me to take over, though I'm sure he wished I was a boy.'

'You have no siblings?' asked Albus. He knew this was getting personal but something told him that this woman knew the information that he needed.

'No, I don't,' Isabelle said shaking her head. 'What about you?'

'I have a younger brother,' Albus responded.

It went quiet for a moment. Albus knew he had to be careful. No-one else here had to hear anything but Albus wanted to again make sure that he wasn't being watched or overheard.

'Do you have any children?' Albus asked quietly.

The question got a response that he was looking for. Isabelle was clearly not expecting the question, she had jumped slightly and her eyes had widened in shock. 'N-no,' she said stumbling.

Albus locked his eyes onto hers and Isabelle seemed unable to look away, she held his gaze. Albus then finished his drink quickly and he thanked Isabelle. He got up from his seat and he left the bar slowly. Isabelle's eyes followed him. She looked as though she were about to cry. She shook for a split second before regaining her composure and going back to work.

Albus couldn't help but smile, he now knew the rumours were true. There was another Riddle out there. All he had to do now was go to the orphanage and pick the child up. When he first started on this journey though, he expected to return home with the knowledge of it all being just a rumour.

Most people were celebrating the death of the Dark Lord, though Albus knew he wasn't dead. He was still out there somewhere, barely alive.

Albus arrived in London the next day and he went to the largest orphanage there. He found it amazing that a child that had two parents still alive was here but he knew the mother couldn't forget what happened and the child would be a constant reminder.

He came to the door and he looked at the building and the surrounding area. It was a nice part of London. Albus had to give the mother something at least; she didn't want her child to grow up in a bad situation. The building was nicely kept and the small garden at the front was often attended to. Albus knocked on the front door and a young woman answered.

'Yes? Hello,' she said quickly.

'Good day,' Albus said kindly. 'I am here to enquire about a child.'

The young woman frowned but he asked nothing more. She unlocked the door and opened it widely. She let Albus pass and he thanked her.

The young woman then walked over to him and held out her hand.  
'Yes, I am Maria. What can I help you with?'

'Well, I have come to see about a child. The surname would probably be Riddle or Baylon.'

Maria frowned again. 'Yes, we have a child with the surname Riddle, and who are you to the child?'

'Oh, please forgive me, I am Albus Dumbledore. I was a good friend of the child's mother and she has asked me to see the child.'

'Are you taking the child with you?'

Albus shrugged slightly. 'If that is possible, then yes, I would be more than happy to give the child a home,' Albus said softly.

'Of course,' Maria replied. 'But please, come and meet her first.'

Albus bowed his head and Maria led the way. They walked down a long hallway and they turned off on the left and began walking up the huge stairway. Albus was quite impressed with how the place looked. If a child had no-one then this place would be a great place for them.

They reached the top and turned left again down another hallway. At the end they walked into a small bedroom, which was highly decorated for a baby. There were four cots in the room and all of them were occupied. Maria walked to the one near the window and Albus followed. The cot was small, and covered in yellow blankets. Albus looked down into the cot.

The baby was fast asleep and was lying quite still. 'Has she been named?' asked Albus.

Maria looked a little embarrassed. 'No,' she said slowly. 'We usually wait for a year and then name them but we're having trouble thinking of the perfect name for this one, but no-one else here has the surname Riddle so we thought it could wait. But I'm sure you might know her parents better and what they might like to name her.'

Albus smiled down at the baby as it moved and coughed slightly. 'Yes, of course,' Albus said smiling. The baby's skin was pale white and the sparse hair on the head was a dark brown. When the baby opened its eyes a little, Albus saw a hint of light brown. Looks just like her father, he thought to himself.

'May I?' he asked indicating to the baby.

Maria nodded. 'I'll go and get the baby's things.'

Maria left and Albus picked the baby up into his arms. She was small and light. She didn't stir when he held her and she didn't awake when a loud noise echoed through the hallway outside, though a few other babies did. Albus reached into his pocket and waved his wand faintly. The babies stopped crying.

When Maria returned she had all the baby's things packed into a bag. Albus couldn't help but feel like they wanted nothing more than to get rid of this child. When Albus left the orphanage he promised to look after her and he made his way home to Godric's Hollow.

He turned his sister's old room in a small nursery and he knew he could change it as she got older. He placed the baby into the cot and he looked down at her again. She still had not awakened. It didn't take long for Albus to think of a name for her.

'Welcome home, Rowena Merope Riddle.'

## Chapter One - Wanted Things Learnt

Rowena sighed as she looked over the small front garden. She liked living in Godric's Hollow, though she wished there was more to do and more people her own age around. She couldn't wait to go back to school. She didn't really have friends, it didn't interest her. She had already learnt how easy it was to control people with her words. It made her feel powerful.

She was sitting in the front garden on a small wooden bench. She sat there stiffly and she watched the leaves and grass ripple in the slight breeze. Her eyes fell upon a lone red rose which was slowly dying. Something about it made her smile faintly. The rest of the roses among the hedge had already perished from the intense heat of the summer. She only had another month to go until school started.

She was almost eighteen and she was most looking forward to it, mostly because she could use her wand and not get into trouble for it, well, she could use it now but her guardian would not allow it. She knew her guardian though wasn't looking forward to it. She had been grounded once because she almost got expelled from the Wizarding School that she attended. It wasn't even her fault... well, not really.

Again Rowena sighed loudly and looked up at the sky. It was a bright blue, there were no clouds around. The birds were out and chirping happily but there wasn't anyone about because of the heat. Everything looked dry. It made her wonder when it would rain.

Because of the heat, and the fact that she was sitting in direct sunlight, Rowena looked down at her arms, they were extremely white. Her whole body was pale and no matter how long she was in the sun, it never changed. It didn't bother her but it made her question it.

After a little while her light brown eyes moved upwards swiftly as she heard several voices coming towards her. Her eyes then found and followed a small group of adults that were walking past the fence. Rowena slipped her socked feet into her sneakers and she walked over. She leaned over the fence. It was locked from the inside by her guardian. She hated that she was stuck here.



Her eyes continued to follow the group, there were two women and three men. Rowena smiled to herself as she lifted her hand and pointed it towards the group, open palmed.

‘Rowena!’

She closed her eyes in annoyance and sighed and lowered her arm. She removed herself from the fence and she turned around. She looked at the man before her. He was tall, thin with a long white hair and beard. His bright blue eyes glowed behind his half-moon spectacles.

‘I hope you weren't planning to use magic on those Muggles.’

As Rowena approached Albus Dumbledore she shook her head once. ‘I wouldn’t dream of it.’

Rowena stopped and Albus took a small step towards his ward, his eyes were serious. ‘The last thing I need is for you to end up in Azkaban for deliberately using magic and using it to attack Muggles.’

Rowena looked into Albus’ eyes but she said nothing. She had nothing to say to that. She wasn’t underage, though Albus seemed to keep forgetting that fact. She couldn’t help but feel like her guardian worried too much. He was uptight about everything. It was another reason that she wanted to leave this place; she had no freedom here, despite her age.

‘You should come inside now. We have things to discuss,’ Albus said softly.

A thought suddenly echoed within her mind, had she done something else wrong? She cautiously walked past Albus who waited for her to walk in first. She knew this house once belonged to Albus’ parents. He told her that after they died it went to him and that he didn’t live in it before he took care of her. Rowena thought about it often but she still didn’t know the circumstances of how she came to be with him. He still refused to tell her anything about the past.

She walked into the kitchen and she could hear Albus not far behind her. She made her way over to the old, rickety table in the middle of the room and she sat down. Albus immediately joined her. He took out his wand and gave it a casual flick. A silver tray with a pot of tea and two matching cups appeared between them on the table.

Rowena eyed it nervously. Albus brought it forwards and poured them each a cup. He then poured milk and one sugar into one of the cups and then passed it over to Rowena. Her mouth twitched and a part of her wanted to scream. He knew her too well; he knew too many things about her.

Albus then picked up his own cup and took a sip but Rowena hadn't moved. She stared at him blankly as she waited for him to speak. She just wanted to know what this was about and get it over with quickly.

Albus smiled at her kindly. 'For your last year of school I would like you to attend Hogwarts,' he said.

A dark look flashed over Rowena's face which did not go unnoticed by Albus, whose smile then disappeared. 'I do not wish to go there. I am happy at Durmstrang,' she said quietly. Her eyes had narrowed slightly but they were locked on Albus' face.

'Well, considering the future, you might not have a choice. I have spoken to the headmaster at Durmstrang though nothing is official.'

'You had no right,' Rowena breathed through gritted teeth.

Albus sighed; he still looked at the young girl sitting opposite him. 'I am your guardian and I did tell you that this might happen. Besides, you'll be safer at Hogwarts.'

'Yes, I do remember that, but you still haven't told me why and besides, I'm almost nineteen,' Rowena reminded him. She felt like she needed to. What about what she wanted?

There was a long, awkward silence. The tension in the room was increasing. Albus looked as though he was waiting for Rowena to say

something else but it never came. Albus sighed again. He knew his ward could be extremely stubborn when she wasn't happy about something.

'What would you like to know about your past?' Albus asked. Maybe it was time she knew about who she really was.

Rowena just nodded and she folded her arms across her chest. She had no questions right now. She just wanted Albus to talk. Her tea was still sitting in front of her untouched. She had been waiting to hear this for a while. She was close to Albus when she was young but from an early age she worked out for herself that he wasn't her father, there was no way she was related to him. They were too different.

'Your mother's name is Isabelle Baylon, she's still alive though she's unable to care for you,' Albus began slowly.

'Why?' Rowena interrupted.

Albus ignored the question and continued as though nothing happened. 'Your father's name is Tom Riddle. He was a wizard but your mother's a Muggle.'

'He was a wizard? Are you saying he's dead?' asked Rowena giving Albus a calculating look.

'I wish you wouldn't interrupt,' Albus said softly. 'Your mother was unable to care for her because she was alone and she was young, she could only just take care of herself. Your father is still alive but he's not the same man that he once was.'

Rowena frowned. 'I don't understand.'

'Your father now goes by the name Lord Voldemort.'

At hearing those words, Rowena shot out of her chair with such force that her chair fell to the ground with a loud thud. She only just made it to the sink where a tiny bit of vomit flew from her mouth. She leaned over the sink and washed her mouth out. Her breathing then

increased heavily and she began to pant. Her stomach felt like it had been dropped to the floor and stomped on.

‘Are you alright?’ Albus asked softly.

The sound of his voice made her want to be sick again. She wasn’t sure why she felt this way. For some reason, she had almost expected him to say who her father was but it still came as a horrible shock. Her eyes widened as the truth began to sink in. It felt as though her chest were about to burst.

She always knew that she was different. It answered a lot of the questions that she had about herself. The reason why she was able to talk to snakes, why she found it easy to manipulate people and why she found the Dark Arts easy and alluring. A part of it scared her but the more she thought it through, the more exciting it seemed. Her real father was a powerful and feared wizard. She knew what she was feeling now was wrong.

‘Do I look like him?’ she asked not moving from the sink.

‘Yes, you look very much like Tom,’ Albus said. ‘Though he had black hair when he was younger, yours is a little lighter.’

‘What about my mother?’ she asked slowly.

‘She had long, red hair and grey eyes, though she’s quite pale also,’ replied Albus gently.

‘Why should I go to Hogwarts?’ asked Rowena. She still had not moved from the sink. She was unable to blink much and she kept her eyes on the stained grey of the sink.

‘Because you’ll be safer there,’ Albus repeated.

‘But why?’ she asked, her voice getting louder.

‘It’s because of who you are,’ he replied softly. ‘People will find out that you’re Voldemort’s daughter and I don’t think many people will

like it. Plus, Tom will then find out about you and I can't risk anything happening to you.'

'Why?' Rowena asked turning to face Albus. She walked over and stood in front of the table, opposite Albus and she leaned against the cupboards against the wall behind her. She folded her arms across her chest and her stare became cold.

Albus sighed. Nothing he said seemed to be getting through. 'Tom won't be happy to learn that he has a child. If you go to Hogwarts, you'll be protected.'

'Watched is more like,' Rowena said coldly.

The room went silent once more. It seemed as though Albus wasn't going to argue, so he remained quiet. Rowena wasn't happy how this talk was going. 'Who named me?' she asked changing the topic.

'I did,' Albus replied. 'I named you Rowena, after Rowena Ravenclaw, she was one of the founders of Hogwarts, a very intelligent and clever witch, and your middle name, Merope, was your grandmother's name.'

'My father's mother?' she asked unsurely.

'Yes.'

Once again, there was silence. Hearing all of this made Rowena feel unsure of herself and she didn't know if she knew who she was anymore. Everything she thought she knew about herself had just been wiped away.

'Do you have any other questions for now?' Albus asked.

'Who's Ariana?' she asked calmly.

She smiled ever so slightly as Albus' facial expression turned into one of surprise. It was not question that he had expected. 'That's not what I meant,' he said softly, his face returning to his calm expression.

Rowena wasn't stupid, she knew it wasn't what he meant but she no longer wanted to talk about her parents and her past. When it was discussed it almost felt like they were talking about someone else's life, not hers.

'She was my sister. Why do you ask?'

'Was your sister? What happened?' Rowena asked frowning.

Albus ignored her questions. 'Why are you asking?' he repeated.

'I was cleaning my room a few weeks ago and I found a small piece of parchment and it had Ariana's name on it, and your brother's,' she answered reluctantly.

Albus stood up from his chair and walked over to Rowena slowly. When he reached her he held out his hand silently. Rowena hated that he seemed to know everything. She had always wondered how he did it. She reached into the inside pocket of her black robes and took out a small, folded piece of parchment. It was old and was turning brown. She handed it to Albus who opened and read it quickly. He then folded it and placed it within his own robes.

'I think that will be all for now. We can finish this discussion later,' Albus said quietly returning to the table.

'Not much of a discussion when you've already made up your mind about my future,' Rowena said as she walked out the door. She closed it roughly behind her and she heard Albus call her but she ignored it. She walked up to the second floor and entered her bedroom.

She knew this room belonged to Ariana because it's where she found the note and she knew it must have been his sister and not some other woman. She couldn't imagine Albus married. It did make her question what happened to Ariana though. She did know Albus' brother; he had come over quite a few times when she was young. They were still in contact, though not as often anymore.

She sighed heavily and lay down on her single bed. She looked up at the ceiling and sighed again. What was going to happen to her now? She just learnt that she wasn't really who she thought and she had to change schools. She wanted to stay at Durmstrang. It wasn't because of the teachers or lack of friends but she felt comfortable there. It was home to her. She didn't want to have to change schools and start all over again.

After a long time of thinking, Rowena eventually fell asleep still wearing her day robes.

In the morning when Rowena went downstairs she couldn't help but notice how quiet it was. She walked into the living room but no-one was there. She entered the kitchen but Albus wasn't in there either. Maybe he had already gone out. It made Rowena a little upset. She wished she could go out when she pleased.

She went into the kitchen and she decided to make breakfast. She exhaled sharply through closed teeth several times throughout the cooking process. She hated living and doing things like a Muggle. Just as she placed the finished product on the table, the kitchen door opened and Albus walked in. He looked around and watched what Rowena was doing for a moment before approaching the table.

'Good morning, Rowena,' he said chirpily.

'Morning,' she replied back not so chirpy.

Albus sat down and he stared at the food for a moment before eating it. Rowena wondered if he thought she might poison him, but Rowena would never do that. She knew it would be too hard to do that to him. A person would need to do something craftier. She sat down at the table, opposite Albus and began eating slowly. Albus' blue eyes looked Rowena up and down before he said anything.

'I have changed my mind.'

Rowena's head shot up at the end of the sentence. What was he talking about? She frowned at him but said nothing, so Albus continued.

'I have decided to let you remain at Durmstrang.'

'If you wanted to keep an eye on me, then why not send me to Hogwarts in the first place?' Rowena asked, ignoring what Albus said, which was what she wanted to hear.

'Because if you remember correctly, I gave you a choice and you chose to go to Durmstrang. Of course I could have forced you to go to Hogwarts but I knew you wouldn't enjoy it and I don't want your school days to be a horrible experience.'

Rowena did remember that day. She was almost twelve and she knew that Albus wanted her to go to Hogwarts, but it was only because he worked there and it was a place he could watch her every move and it wasn't something Rowena was comfortable with. She needed much time away from him and his watchful eyes. It gave her peace and she was able to relax.

'What changed your mind?' asked Rowena quietly.

'I remember that day and the choice you made. Of course, people will find out about you but I don't know if many people will make the connection at Durmstrang. But you do know that if something happens I will have to remove you from that school?' Albus enquired.

Rowena nodded her understanding but she thought Albus worried too much. Nothing was going to happen while she was at school. She knew how to take care of herself, she was quite good at it and she knew it. She knew that many teachers had informed Albus on her lack of communication and socialisation with other students but Rowena continued to ignore it. She wasn't interested in other people.

Over the next few days her school things arrived and Rowena had already packed her trunk. She was looking forward to going back to school and away from this place. She felt a little guilty but she ignored it. She did love Albus but she couldn't stand how he was most of the time.



When it was time for her to go, she stood in front of the fireplace and Albus threw in a handful of Floo powder, making the fireplace turn into a great green inferno. Rowena breathed deeply and she placed her trunk in first and she turned to Albus before stepping in as well. She knew there were things that he wanted to say.

‘Now, I want you to behave and look after yourself and no getting yourself into trouble.’

‘I won't,’ Rowena said back automatically. She had heard this every time she went back.

She went to turn to the fire but Albus grabbed her shoulder and she stopped. He stepped towards her and hugged her loosely. She didn't like hugs, she wasn't that affectionate but she patted his back a couple of times.

‘Bye,’ she said inaudibly.

If he said it back, she didn't hear. She was already whizzing through the fire and she landed in an office. It was the headmaster's office at Durmstrang.

## Chapter Two – Back to School

‘Welcome back, Miss Riddle,’ headmaster Anton Dobtcheff said joyfully.

Rowena couldn’t help but feel he loved the school too much. Professor Dobtcheff was a good man, Rowena knew that. He was quite tall and he had short black hair and bright silver eyes. When she first met him they scared her a little. She said hello back and grabbed her trunk and made her way to her dormitory. She heard the fire lit up again and the headmaster cheer. ‘Welcome back, Mr. Jenson.’

Rowena couldn’t help but roll her eyes and she closed the door behind her and walked down the steps. The castle wasn’t that big. There were only three floors and there was one tower where all the students slept. There weren’t many students here, since it was only a small school. As far as Rowena knew there were only about fifty students here, twenty-five girls and twenty-five boys, though sometimes the ratio did vary.

She had learnt that the school used to have more students but since Hogwarts and many other surrounding schools were built, all students liked to go somewhere closer to home or somewhere bigger. It didn’t bother Rowena too much. She considered Durmstrang home and she knew a few other people did as well. William Jenson was one of them. She had spoken to William before and she learnt he was from Australia. There was a wizarding school there but he wanted to come here.

Some of the subjects were taught by teachers who spoke no English, but it wasn’t hard for Rowena to translate the language magically. She had thought about learning it but she couldn’t think of where else she might use it. She walked slowly through the small corridor until she came to the end and she turned right and walked down another corridor which was long.

Most of the floors were made of stone but a few rooms had wooden floors. She knew out of all the wizarding schools that this one wasn’t the most magnificent or the greatest to look at from the outside or

inside but Rowena thought it was beautiful. She could stay here forever.

It didn't take much longer until she reached the dorm rooms. She entered into the main common room and there were only a few people there. They all looked up at her as she entered and most people looked away when they realised it wasn't one of their friends. She walked to her room and she placed her things in the corner. It was one good thing about attending a small school, you get your own room, and you don't have to share with others.

Rowena settled herself on her bed and she took out her wand. She studied it carefully, yew and dragon heartstring. She took very good care of it. It was her weapon, her tool, she needed it. She looked towards her trunk and she flicked her wand upwards but she remained quiet. Her trunk moved to the end of her bed and her clothes flew from it and placed themselves neatly in the tall, black wardrobe in the corner.

When it was finished she smiled to herself. She was proud of her ability to do non-verbal spells. She never found them hard to do. She had learnt them last year and quite quickly at that too. Rowena did have to admit that she wasn't very good at normal, everyday charms. The lessons were usually long and Rowena found them to be a waste of her time.

Her favourite subject, by far, was Dark Arts. She enjoyed it the most. She knew Hogwarts taught Defence Against the Dark Arts. The two subjects weren't the same thing. Rowena turned back to her trunk and pointed her wand at it.

'Contego.'

A small pink sensation surrounded the trunk and eventually died down. It protects her trunk. She did lock her dorm room door when she wasn't here but she didn't want people looking at her things. They were private.

When it became dark outside, Rowena was still in her room. She didn't go down for dinner. She wasn't hungry. She stayed reading her

Dark Arts textbook. It made her happy and it relaxed her. Just before midnight she decided to get some sleep. Her new classes started tomorrow.

In the morning when Rowena woke up, she checked her clock, it was just after eight. She got dressed slowly and made her way down to the main Hall. The tables were already set. Rowena walked over to the student table and sat down. Food appeared before her instantly. There was only one other student at the table, Veronika Anaya, she was a fourth year student. Rowena had never spoken to her before.

She grabbed a piece of toast and buttered it lightly. Veronika seemed unable to look away from Rowena but she continued eating, she was a small girl with black hair and blue eyes. Rowena wondered why she appeared so nervous. When the rest of the students joined them, Rowena didn't sense anything different with them. Maybe something had happened to Veronika.

She shrugged to herself lightly and went back to her toast. When the teachers finished their breakfast they passed everyone's timetables out and Rowena immediately studied her own, though she knew everyone's would be similar. She had History of Magic first. She quite liked the subject, though of course not everything was entirely interesting.

Rowena stood up and left the hall without looking behind her. She went back to her dorm room and got her books for the day and set off for the History of Magic classroom which was on the first floor. She made her way there and waited inside the classroom. The students were allowed to enter the classrooms before the lesson started, except for Potions, but it varied for different students. Only sixth and seventh years were allowed to enter the room before the teacher arrived. The headmaster wasn't sure it was a good idea for the younger students to be around ingredients, might be too tempting.

She took a small desk at the back and set her things up neatly. She only had to wait for ten minutes for the teacher to walk in. He looked up at smiled at Rowena. 'I should have known you'd be the first one here. Someone might think you actually like this subject.'

Rowena smiled mechanically. Professor Ruban Gauk was quite a young man; Rowena guessed he was in his late-twenties. He was polite to everyone and he loved this subject more than anything. He was a medium height, with cherry red hair and bright blue eyes that twinkled sometimes during class. He was one of those teachers that wanted to make every lesson fun and exciting.

‘Well, I don’t hate the subject,’ Rowena said softly.

Professor Gauk chuckled quietly. ‘Well, at least someone doesn’t mind it, then.’

Rowena said nothing more but she watched as Professor Gauk set up his books for today’s lesson. He was the only teacher who spoke all languages here fluently. It surprised Rowena because of his age, he was young, she normally would have expected him to be older but she also knew that the mind was a mysterious and wonderful thing.

Within another fifteen minutes the rest of the students piled into the classroom and settled themselves into their seats. Gauk began their lesson almost immediately and the lesson continued on about Goblins. Last year they learnt about Goblins in the thirteenth century but now they were doing the fourteenth century and Gauk promised it was going to be the last thing they do on Goblins. Rowena had rolled her eyes slightly. She didn’t care too much about the problems and hardships of Goblins.

When the lesson finished, they all had a small break before going to their next class but Rowena didn’t take it. She walked to the Arithmancy classroom and waited. The small break was only for ten minutes, and she could spend that time reading or finishing a project or something else. Rowena took a seat at the back again and looked around the classroom.

It looked the same as last year, except for some charts on the wall, which had been updated before the school year. While Rowena waited she looked the charts over and she found one on moonstones, which quite intrigued her, though she thought they were mainly used for Potions, but she knew it could have just been for decoration. She

sat back down and looked her textbook over. It didn't look much different to last year's book.

The rest of the students walked in and took their seats and they all waited another ten minutes before the teacher showed up. Rowena knew that Madam Zoya Katzev sometimes liked to be the last in the classroom. Rowena thought it had something to do with making an entrance but she wasn't sure.

Madam Katzev was a pretty witch. She had long, red hair and dark green eyes. She was quite pale but Rowena knew anyone that was here long enough would be pale too. This teacher was only young as well and she used to get nervous about teaching but it only lasted a couple of years. She was now one of the most bright and confident teachers that Rowena had ever met.

Madam Katzev did speak English but it definitely wasn't her first language. Rowena still got a translation done because she was sometimes hard to understand when she spoke English.

Rowena's next lesson of the day was Muggle Studies. It always made her cringe. Secretly, Rowena didn't like Muggles all too much. She found they got in the way of their world, they were ruining it. But she took the lesson to learn about them and their ways. Albus had been proud when she took the selective subject. She knew Albus loved Muggles and that he was quite fond of them. Rowena didn't quite share his views.

When she entered the classroom, which was on the second floor, she saw that the teacher was already there. Professor Maksim Sadova was a muggle-born wizard and he was an old wizard in his seventies. Rowena was surprised he was still teaching. He was a short wizard, with brown hair, though he was balding and he had dark brown eyes and he wore very small, round glasses.

Professor Sadova looked up when Rowena walked into the room. 'Oh, good afternoon, Miss Riddle,' he said, his voice wheezing.

'Afternoon, Professor,' Rowena said back politely. 'I hope I'm not interrupting.'

The teacher looked up at her with wide eyes. He seemed surprised or startled by something. 'Oh no, no, not at all, please take your seat,' he said. His voice was cracking.

Rowena nodded very slightly and she went to sit down at the back once again. It was where she always sat. She took her things out and waited for the class to begin. The other students came in and Professor Sadova seemed to get more nervous. His brow furrowed and sweat formed on his forehead. Rowena wondered if he was feeling alright, though, she didn't really care.

'Alright,' said Professor Sadova said when everyone was ready. 'I think we should continue our lessons on Muggle electricity. Now, they use it to power up things so they can use them....'

For some reason, Rowena tuned out. She wasn't interested in knowing about Muggles today. They weren't really worth her time. On her Muggle Studies textbook, which was opened to the inside cover, Rowena wrote her mothers' name. She then stared at it before tracing over it again a few times, making it darker and thicker.

Her mother was a Muggle. Rowena hated the thought. She wondered what her mother did for a living, where she lived, if she had other children or if she was married or had a boyfriend. There were many things she wanted to know about her. She knew she could ask Albus but there was no guarantee that she would get an answer from him. He didn't like talking about her past if he could help it.

Rowena's last class of the day was Herbology. It was another subject that Rowena wasn't too fond of. She didn't care too much for plants, but Albus had strongly suggested that she take it. The teacher was Madam Olga Sokodv. She was one of the teachers that spoke no English at all, which wasn't too bad since Rowena was never asked to answer a question during class. She still got good grades, but during class she didn't always pay that much attention.

At the end of the day, when all class had finished, Rowena went in to the hall for an early dinner. She had skipped lunch, she did most days. William was the other student there and he smiled as she walked

over and sat next to him. Rowena knew that most of the other students waited longer to have dinner.

‘Hi,’ William said quickly. ‘How was your first day back?’

‘It was fine,’ Rowena replied stiffly. She wasn’t a people person and she wasn’t social at all. She wasn’t interested in conversing too much but William was different. He sometimes followed her around and would sit next to her after all their classes were finished. Rowena thought of him as a puppy, a very loyal one.

‘I can’t believe it’s our last year. I’m not looking forward to it ending,’ William said almost sadly.

‘Why?’ Rowena asked as she put some lamb onto her plate.

‘Well,’ William said slowly. ‘My father works at the Ministry in Australia and he wants me to work with him when I’m finished here but I don’t really want to.’

‘Then why don’t you do something else?’ Rowena asked. She then started putting some vegetables and potatoes onto her plate while William took some Sheppard’s pie.

‘Because he already has this planned and I don’t want to disappoint him.’

‘But it’s your life,’ Rowena pointed out.

‘Yeah...’

The conversation between them died. Whenever they spoke together it never really lasted that long. They ate in silence and when they had almost finished more students came in and sat down. Rowena looked up as a girl in her year sat opposite her and gave her a cold smile.

‘Didn’t think you come back here, Riddle,’ she said smirking.

Rowena looked up at her again. It was Alisa Rivera. She was in the same year and Rowena had always had a problem with her. Alisa



flicked back her long, dark red hair and kept her cold aqua coloured eyes on her. She had faint freckles sprinkled across her nose and she was quite pale. Rowena knew that Alisa wasn't from here. Her accent wasn't heavy.

'Why wouldn't I? Because I'm scared of you?' Rowena asked.

William wanted to say something but Alisa cut him off and she ignored Rowena's questions. 'You love her, don't you Jenson? Too bad Riddle is too queer to like you back.'

Alisa's friends, who were seating next to her, all began to giggle and snigger behind their hands. Rowena finished the last few bites of food on her plate and she looked at Alisa again. 'Well, you're just upset because William doesn't like you,' Rowena said back calmly.

'As if!' Alisa said loudly. 'As if I would like someone like him. Besides, he's a freak.'

'How did you come to that conclusion?' Rowena asked. She was still calm and she placed her hands together across her flat stomach and she kept her eyes on Alisa.

'Because he likes you, see, that means you're a freak too,' Alisa said simply.

'You're entitled to your opinion,' Rowena said quietly.

She stood up from her seat and left the hall. She heard Alisa say something but she didn't hear what it was. Rowena returned to the student tower and from her dorm room she retrieved her Dark Arts textbook. After hours of reading Rowena put her book back and did the same charms as last time and she made her way to the third floor, where the library was.

The librarian was Madam Aurora Gibbon. She was a strange witch. She didn't mind students taking books but she felt like they had them in possession for too long. She did keep good care of the books though, maybe too much care. When they had been brought back to

the library by a student she was immediately clean them and perform certain charms and spells before placing back on the shelf.

She was an elderly witch, about in her sixties and she was short, stooped actually, with auburn hair and blue eyes. She wasn't pale at all, her skin was tanned, though how Rowena didn't know but she was sure that this librarian didn't always work here. It would be hard to get a tan from living here all your life.

The library was small but it did contain some books which Rowena found quite useful. She found some interesting ones on the Dark Arts and she checked them out. Madam Gibbon's eyes watched her until she could no longer be seen. After passing the Charms classroom Rowena yelped in slight surprise as the books in her arms fell to the ground, causing a loud thud to echo the empty halls.

Before moving, Rowena looked around. She couldn't see or hear anyone. She slowly bent down to pick them up but she was then knocked over by a spell. She hit the ground hard and she groaned and rubbed her arm. She knew it would bruise there later. She heard something walking towards her from behind. She quickly picked up her wand and threw a stunning spell.

She turned her head just in time to see the spell hit Alisa in the chest and she watched her fall to the ground, causing another thud to echo the empty corridor. Rowena stood up and cautiously walked over to Alisa. Another incident between them. There had been one every year on the first day back to school. Last year Alisa gave her food poisoning, though she wasn't quite sure how Alisa accomplished it.

The door to the Charms classroom opened and the charms teacher, Professor Roger Baransti, came out, his eyes wide and his facial expression startled. He looked at the scene before him, taking everything in quickly before moving towards his two students.

'Miss Riddle!' he exclaimed. 'What is going on here?'

Rowena turned to look at him. Professor Baransti was middle-aged, he was in his forties and he was tall with a solid frame and broad shoulders. His hair was brown and it reached his shoulders easily.

His dull blue eyes were searching Rowena's rapidly as he waited for an answer.

'Alisa attacked me as I came out of the library. I was defending myself.'

'Defending yourself?' the professor repeated. 'It looked like you were attacking Miss Rivera.'

Rowena rolled her eyes but it didn't go unnoticed. 'Do you have something else to say, Miss Riddle?' Professor Baransti asked.

'Not really,' she replied.

'Not really?' Baransti repeated.

Rowena couldn't help but roll her eyes again. 'Miss Rivera, go back to your dorm room. Miss Riddle, come into my office, now.'

Baransti lifted the stunning spell off Alisa got up from the floor and she smirked at Rowena as she walked past but of course Baransti didn't notice that. She walked into the classroom and up a small flight of stairs to his office. The office was small and slightly cramped from all the books that were piled high around the room.

'Sit down,' he said shortly.

Rowena did as she was told and she sat down in the chair in front of his desk. Baransti closed the door and sat down in his desk chair. He looked Rowena over carefully. Rowena really wished he wouldn't. This was her only teacher that she had a problem with. He always found a way to blame her.

'I don't suppose you want to tell the truth about what happened?' he asked shuffling a few papers on his messy desk.

'I've already done that,' Rowena said quietly.

Professor Baransti sighed and he wiped his brow before putting his elbows on the table and entwining his fingers and leaning on the desk.

'I don't want to have to send a letter to Albus Dumbledore about you again. I think he has enough on his plate right now.'

Rowena noticed the slight smile on Baransti face before it disappeared. She had her own problems with Albus but they were private and it didn't change how she felt about him. She hated hearing other people talking about him in a bad way, even if she wasn't present but she knew it happened all the time. Her mouth twitched but she said nothing.

'I won't give you a detention on your first day back, but be warned I will not do this for you again,' he said firmly.

'I understand. Thank you,' Rowena said politely. She smiled faintly through her teeth. She didn't mean it. She knew this teacher would love nothing more than to get her into trouble and it wasn't going to take long for something else to happen that would also be her fault.

'You may leave.'

Rowena nodded her head once and got up from her seat. She left Baransti's office silently and she picked up the library books which were still lying on the floor in the corridor. She then made her way to her dorm room, where she quickly got changed and spent most of the night reading.

As Rowena got dressed and ready the next day, she looked at herself in the mirror. Her body was flawless, pale and soft. Rowena liked rubbing her stomach before she covered it with her red school robes. She sighed and shook herself from her thoughts and sat on the bed to place her shoes on. She then grabbed her books and walked to her first class.

She walked to the Potions classroom which was located in the dungeons, most of which was located underground. It was dark and people only came down here for Potions, or if they were doing something they shouldn't be doing. She entered the classroom and it was empty, she was the first person to arrive again. Rowena wasn't really hungry right now. She set her things up for this lessons and she waited.

The next person in the room was William. He walked over to Rowena and handed her a piece of buttered toast. He knew she never put anything on it. 'I just thought you might want something,' he said before walking away to his own desk.

Rowena mumbled her thanks and she ate half of it. She actually wasn't that hungry. She had discarded the rest by the time Professor Katya Yudina walked into the room. She hadn't been the potions master here for long. This was her third year. The previous teacher retired, saying he wanted to see more of the world before he got too old and unable to.

This new Potions teacher was quite young. Rowena couldn't imagine that she was much older than her. She was quite plain looking, and she was quite short in height with short, black hair and green eyes. She was white, but she wasn't pale, her skin had quite a healthy glow to it. It always made Rowena think she was pregnant.

The students arrived for the lesson quickly and it began almost immediately. In these lessons this teacher would just open the potion cupboard and tell them what potion to make, then at the end she'd tell them to bottle it, label it and hand it in. Their previous teacher would do the same thing, open the cupboard and tell them the potion they were going to make but he would then talk about it before allowing them to start.

Rowena did have to admit that they were able to finish the potion quicker when it wasn't explained and they were allowed to get on with it. They were now usually given the information about the potion for homework. It was the main difference that the students didn't like. Today they would be making a strengthening solution. They had made it before but Rowena didn't mind. It was extra practice.

The next class was Astronomy. Rowena found the class quite enjoyable but she thought the teacher talked too much while they were looking at stars and things. He would often go on about them and Rowena found it quite distracting and it was mostly in his native language which Rowena didn't speak and that alone was annoying. A few times before she had been tempted to shut him up with her wand

but she knew it would be inappropriate and that she would get into a lot of trouble for it.

She walked up to the Astronomy tower and she entered the small room. Only a small number of students took this class. It wasn't very popular here. The teacher was already in the room and everything had already been set up. Professor Yuri Zolkin was a tall man, with very short blonde hair and green eyes. His skin was white and he had many brown freckles up his arms and on his face. He was one of their most laid back teachers and he didn't always wear his robes, he sometimes just wore Muggles clothes to class.

When the class ended Rowena went to the library. She now had a free period and she always spent them reading in the library. When it finished she went to her last class of the day, which was charms. A subject that she wasn't very fond of and it had a lot to do with her teacher, Professor Baransti. She wasn't looking forward to it.

She entered the classroom and she was kind of relieved that he wasn't here yet. He was usually a very prompt teacher. She settled herself at the back desk and she waited and she kept her eyes on the office door and the top of the small flight of stairs. Within a few moments it opened and Baransti came out and walked to his desk in the classroom. His eyes went straight to Rowena, who was leaning back in her chair, watching him.

He eventually looked away and went back to his desk and the things on it. Rowena couldn't help it. She cocked an eyebrow at him and she sighed faintly. For some reason, she felt happy today. When the rest of her classmates came into the room she took her eyes off Baransti and she opened her books.

Please review (Unless you don't want to lol)

## Chapter Three - Murder

‘Very well, class, open your books to page two hundred and thirty one and we’ll start from there.’

Rowena turned the pages languidly until she reached the right one. Professor Baransti was still looking down at the book before he moved or said anything else.

‘Actually, today, I would like to do some revision. Everyone pair up and we’ll go through some of the ones we’ve done before.’

Some students nodded and everyone put their things away and stood up and moved to the middle of the room. Baransti waved his wand and the desks and chairs disappeared. Rowena was already holding her wand. She looked at her teacher again. He appeared nervous about something but she couldn’t work out what it was. For the rest of the lesson they practiced things they already knew.

When the class finished Rowena was the last person to leave the classroom. She felt the teacher’s eyes on her the whole way out the door. She wondered what was wrong with him. It suddenly struck Rowena; some people here might know what her father’s name was before he took Lord Voldemort. Maybe Baransti knew and it would mean he knew that she was the Dark Lord’s daughter. Maybe he was frightened.

Rowena decided to think of it no more and after dinner she went back to her dorm room. She stayed in there for the rest of the night.

In the morning when she got up, she got dressed and went down for breakfast. It was quite uneventful. She then went straight to her first class which was Ancient Runes. It was a subject that Rowena quite enjoyed but too much of it wasn’t a good thing. Only a few other students took this elective. It wasn’t very popular, as it was one of the hardest subjects, along with Arithmancy.

She entered the classroom and took her seat at the back. The teacher was already there and she was writing on the blackboard. Professor Eve Liapun was a different teacher. She was quite strict

and severe. Her face immediately gave you the impression that she wasn't someone to cross. She was average height and she had dark blonde hair with stormy, cold grey eyes.

A few minutes after writing on the board, Professor Liapun finished and she turned to look at Rowena. This teacher could speak English but she only spoke it when she had to. 'Good morning, Miss Riddle,' she said politely.

'Morning, Professor.'

'First one here yet again, I'm not surprised,' she said with a sly smile.

It was unusual to see one but Rowena knew that this teacher liked her. Rowena smiled back slowly though it faded when the footsteps outside got closer and the door to the classroom opened again and her classmates piled in to the room. Rowena sighed and opened her books.

Her next class for the day was transfiguration. It was another subject which Rowena didn't mind. Sometimes it was interesting and sometimes it wasn't. Last year they had learnt about Animagi. Rowena loved the idea of being able to transform into an animal. There were so many things you could do. You could move around without much interference, though Rowena did know that it depended on what animal you turned into.

Professor Ivan Nikolin was already in the classroom. Everything was ready and he was just patiently waiting for the rest of the class. He nodded hello to Rowena and she returned it. She took a seat at the back and she looked back at her teacher. He was a nice man, though; he did have a temper on bad days. Rowena knew he was sixty-six years old, he had told them his age when someone had asked out of curiosity.

His grey hair was wiry and thin and he had brown eyes. He was an older teacher but he didn't move like it. He was quite active and he talked excitedly about this subject during class. One on one talks were sometimes better with him, they were more personal and he focused just on you when he was talking. He was one of the



friendliest teachers they had and he didn't give them homework unless they really needed it.

'Good day, Miss Riddle!' he said happily.

'Hello, Professor,' she replied.

She smiled at him but she knew it was a fake one. Nikolin was happy today, a good thing about that was he wasn't likely to give them homework later. Rowena didn't mind homework, it kept her busy, but still. It would give her more time to read her Dark Arts textbook, which she loved doing.

After class Rowena went to her Muggle Studies class. It was the same like last time. She opened her textbook and her eyes went straight to her mother's name, which she wrote in the last lesson. Her eyes stayed on it longer than normal. She still wanted to meet her mother but today she felt an unusual urgency. Her feelings about her mother hadn't changed.

She was still angry that her mother sent her to an orphanage as a baby and that she had to be raised by someone she wasn't even related to. Rowena couldn't deny that she did love Albus, but still, he wasn't family. Her mother should have been the one to take care of her, not a stranger. But a part of her was happy that she got to know Albus. He was a great wizard.

After Muggle Studies, Rowena went to her last class of the day which was Dark Arts. Her first lesson of it this year, she couldn't wait. Her teacher was Professor Alla Sevnik. She was a mysterious woman. She had hip-length black hair and black eyes. She was quite pale and Rowena was sure she loved the Dark Arts as much as she did. Professor Sevnik had written a small book about the things she had encountered and survived. Rowena thought she was a good role model for her.

Professor Sevnik was her favourite teacher and they got along quite well. Rowena had read the small book she wrote many times. It was quite fascinating. Professor Sevnik had led quite a life, and she was still young. Rowena knew she was thirty-five. She had faced a group

of vampires, fought off an attack by a werewolf and she once disappeared among a group of hags. Rowena ever wondered she would ever do something similar.

She entered the classroom quickly and settled herself at the back, which was quite dark in this classroom. Rowena had told Professor Sevnik that she could talk to snakes and Sevnik found it quite interesting. She had never met a parselmouth and it interested her. Rowena once thought about getting a pet snake but Albus wouldn't allow it. She didn't have a pet at the moment, though and she planned on getting a snake when she could.

Professor Sevnik arrived to class a few minutes after every student was there. She sent Rowena a small smile and she began the lesson. She talked about the subject as though it was her lover and she almost caressed it with her words. Rowena hung onto the end of every word.

When the class ended Rowena went to her dorm room and she lay down on the bed and read the Dark Arts books that she got from the library. It didn't take for her to be disturb. There was a small knock at the door. Rowena stood up and she walked over to the door. She opened it only a little and she looked through the crack. It was William. He looked at her quickly, before looking around him. He looked scared.

Rowena opened the door further and he ran into the room. She closed the door again and looked him over. He walked over to the other side of the room. 'Is something wrong?' Rowena asked quietly.

'Alisa and her friends are after me,' he said quickly. He was beginning to sweat.

'You're a guy,' Rowena pointed out. 'You should be able to beat her.'

'Yeah,' he said nervously. 'But not on my own.'

Rowena shook her head and she took her wand out and conjured a chair in the corner. She approached William and she pushed him into

the chair. He fixed himself up and looked at the door again before taking a deep breath and looking at Rowena.

‘Thanks,’ he muttered.

Rowena dismissed it and she went back her bed and reading her books. It didn’t stay silent for long. ‘There are rumours about you going around,’ he said looking at her.

‘Like what?’ Rowena asked. It didn’t surprise her to hear that. There are always rumours of someone going around. She wondered what people could be saying about her.

‘Well...’ William’s voice turned shaky. Rowena looked up at him quickly. ‘What is it?’ she asked, now slightly alarmed.

‘That your father is a Dark Lord,’ he said quietly.

‘Really?’ Rowena asked acting surprised. ‘Is that it?’

‘No. I heard Alisa say that it’s You-Know-Who that’s your father but I’m not sure whether I believe her.’

‘What if it were true?’ Rowena asked. She placed her book back onto the bed and she focused her attention onto William, who now looked very uncomfortable.

‘Are you saying it is true?’

‘Yes,’ she said simply. ‘For once rumours and gossips are telling the truth without realising it.’

‘But... he’s in England... you’re here, doesn’t he know about you?’ William asked rushing.

‘Maybe. I don’t know. I’ve never met him,’ said Rowena.

‘Wow,’ William breathed.

He now looked at Rowena with admiration. He was close to someone who he thought was powerful. He then looked down at the floor. 'Do you think everyone knows, the truth, I mean?'

Rowena shrugged. She honestly didn't care too much. 'I don't know. I don't think it would really matter.'

William nodded his head a few too many times. There was suddenly a loud bang outside the door and both Rowena and William stood up. Rowena held her wand out immediately at the ready and William moved to stand behind her. The doors burst open and Alisa and friends walked in.

'Get out of my room,' Rowena said quietly.

'Why?' Alisa asked. 'I quite like it in here. I suppose William told you all about the rumours. But I don't think there's any way you could be the Dark Lord's daughter. You're weak and not pretty enough.'

'You should look in the mirror; at least I have two eyebrows.'

A look of pure shock formed on Alisa's face. It wasn't the comeback she was expecting. Alisa reached for her wand but she wasn't quick enough. 'Expelliarmus,' Rowena yelled.

Alisa's wand flew from her hands and Rowena grabbed it quickly. Alisa's cheeks went pink and she backed up to the door in small steps, the three friends ran from the room and Rowena smiled. She lifted her wand again. Her dorm room door shut and it clicked, Rowena locked it. Alisa's facial expression turned to fear and William moved away from both of them and he leaned against the wall. He didn't want to get involved.

'W-what are you d-doing?' Alisa asked shakily.

'Oh, what's wrong?' Rowena taunted. 'Scared? Your little friends aren't here to help you insult and laugh. Oh, I guess it's my turn but I do things quite differently. Incarcerous.'

A loud bang came from Rowena's wand and ropes flew out and wrapped around Alisa's body. She shrieked and Rowena pointed the tip of the wand up to the ceiling where the rope now stuck. Rowena smiled and looked her over. Alisa was struggling and pulling on the rope, trying to free herself but Rowena knew it wouldn't work. They were magical ropes.

'Let me go,' Alisa said a little stronger.

'What are you going to do about it?'

William stayed where he was and watched. His eyes were wide but he kept quiet. Rowena walked over to where Alisa was hanging and stroked her cheek with one finger. 'Poor little dear.'

Alisa's face turned into anger and she spat in Rowena's face. It felt as though everything stopped for a moment. Rowena closed her eyes and breathed deeply twice before opening her eyes again. She wiped her face clean with the sleeve of her robe and she waved her wand quickly. Alisa's lips were stuck together, she couldn't open her mouth.

Tears ran quickly down Alisa's face. Rowena knew she was scared but she didn't care right now. It was her enjoyment. After at least twenty minutes, Rowena removed the spell and Alisa was able to talk and open her mouth again.

'Fuck you!' she yelled.

Rowena smiled wickedly. Alisa hadn't learnt her lesson. She needed to be taught some manners. 'I think you should wash your mouth out. What would your parents think about your dirty orifice? Scourgify.'

Alisa began to cough and her mouth began to foam with pink bubbles. She coughed more and she began to choke. Her eyes watered and her face began to go blue but Rowena let it happen. William ran over to Rowena's side. 'Please, stop it. Let her breathe,' he begged.

'Very well,' Rowena said after a moment's thought.

She waved her wand over Alisa's face and the spell disappeared. Alisa spat out the rest of the soap buds and they fell onto her robes and the floor. Rowena ignored it. She continued to cry.

'P-please, I-let m-me g-go,' she said slowly.

The room then went quiet. Rowena twirled her wand in her fingers and she looked Alisa over. Maybe she had had enough. She waved her wand again, the ropes disappeared and Alisa fell heavily onto the floor. She looked up straight away and the door clicked again, it was now unlocked. Alisa got up quickly she ran out the door, but Rowena couldn't help herself. She waved her wand again and whispered, 'Furnunculus.'

Alisa kept running and she screamed. The door to the tower opened and it slammed shut again. Rowena's smile disappeared. She knew she was going to get into a lot of trouble for this. She turned and looked at William who moved again. He was leaning against the wardrobe. His skin had turned a sickly pale white and he looked like he was going to vomit.

Rowena walked over to her bed and sat down upon it. William wasn't sure whether he should leave or stay. He was stuck. He knew what he saw was wrong but he thought Alisa sort of deserved it. After an hour Rowena got up from her bed and she gestured for William to leave. He did and quite quickly. Rowena left as well and she locked the door behind her.

She walked down the second floor corridor and she heard her name. She was expecting this. 'Miss Riddle, come here now!'

She turned. It was Professor Baransti. Rowena frowned a little. Why hadn't Alisa gone to the headmaster but then it hit her, Alisa must have known noticed that Baransti didn't like her too much, especially after what happened last time. Rowena walked over to him.

'Is there a problem, Professor?' she asked innocently.

'You know there is. Miss Rivera had just told me a disturbing tale. I have already spoken to the headmaster and your guardian has been called.'

Rowena remained quiet but inside she was worried. Baransti gave her an evil smile, he look triumphant. 'You've gone too far this time,' he said smirking. 'Follow me.'

Rowena still said nothing and she followed Baransti to the headmaster's office. Professor Dobtcheff was sitting behind his desk and when Rowena entered, he gave her a grave look. Rowena looked to the corner, Alisa was there and she stifled a cry when Rowena walked into the room.

'Miss Rivera, you may go,' Dobtcheff said softly.

Alisa nodded and she slid across the wall, making sure she faced Rowena the whole way out and she quietly slipped out the door.

'Albus should be here soon,' Dobtcheff said quietly.

Rowena nodded and she still said nothing. She was surprised that they told the truth. Albus was there within another ten minutes and he arrived by Floo powder. When he arrived Rowena stood up and Albus looked her over before approaching. Rowena sat back down and Albus sat in the seat beside her. He shook hands with the headmaster and he sat down also. Baransti moved near the window, he remained standing.

'Miss Riddle, Albus is aware of what happened, we just wanted him to be here when we asked you questions,' he said gently. 'Why did you attack Miss Rivera?'

Rowena paused and hesitated slightly. 'I... because she was taunting me and I didn't like it,' she said slowly.

'Then you should tell someone,' Dobtcheff said looking into Rowena's eyes, who looked back emotionless. 'If something is going on then you must tell someone, don't let it continue. But you do know what you did was still very wrong.'

Rowena just nodded. She turned her head and looked at Albus, he still hadn't moved since he sat down. He didn't need to say anything. His silence and lack of eye contact said it all.

'I'm not sure what to do with you. You were almost expelled two years ago for something similar, though I will admit that this was less severe but you still could have killed Miss Rivera and I'm sure her parents won't be at all happy.'

He paused and sighed heavily. 'I won't expel you but be warned if anything like this happens again, I'll have no choice.'

'What will you do then?' asked Albus quietly.

'Well,' he started. 'I think Miss Riddle should apologise to Miss Rivera and then I think it would be good if she were suspended for a month. I'm sure you'll catch up with no problems when you return.'

It was then Albus' turn to sigh. 'Very well, I'll take her back with me. Rowena, go and get your things and come back here immediately.'

Rowena nodded and she stood up and left. When she returned she had a bag with her and her books. The headmaster threw some Floo powder into the fireplace and said the destination as Hogwarts. Albus took Rowena's things and he waited for her first. She stepped into fire and she felt herself turn before she landed in another office. Albus was right behind her.

Rowena looked around. She had never been here before. But she knew this was Albus' office at Hogwarts. It was a circular room covered in thick, blue carpet. There was a fire in the corner which was roaring with fire and behind the desk was many tall book shelves packed with books. In another corner there was a large perch but nothing on it. Did he have a pet? Rowena had never seen one before.

She moved into the room and Albus placed her bags down instantly. Rowena guessed she wasn't staying here. Rowena watched Albus. She couldn't take her eyes off him. The part of her that loved Albus now felt guilty about what she had done.



'I'm sorry,' she said inaudibly.

'It feels like last time,' Albus commented. 'And I'm not the one you should apologise to.'

Rowena nodded, she knew that much. She knew she had to apologise when she goes back to school. She was grateful that she wasn't expelled though but she couldn't help but fear where Albus was going to place her.

'Where am I staying?' she asked quietly.

Albus didn't answer straight away. He walked over to the window and he whistled. He then moved to his desk and wrote on a small piece of parchment. Rowena almost jumped out of her skin as a Phoenix flew into the room and landed beside Albus. It seemed to sing softly and Albus placed the note within its beak. 'Take this to my brother and make sure he reads it.'

The Phoenix didn't hesitate. It took off gracefully and flew out the open window. 'With my brother,' Albus said answering Rowena's question. 'The note is for him to come and get you.'

'Why can't I stay here?' Rowena asked.

'Because you can't,' Albus said firmly.

Within half-an-hour the fireplace lit up and the flames turned green and a man stepped through. Both Albus and Rowena immediately knew it was Aberforth. Rowena thought they both looked alike, they have similar hair and beards and they both have the same blue eyes, though Rowena sometimes thought Aberforth looked grumpy, which he did right now.

He immediately directed his eyes at his brother who was looking back. 'What the hell Albus, at this time of night,' he said loudly.

'I wouldn't have called but I need someone to look after Rowena for about a month,' Albus said coolly.

Aberforth then looked at Rowena; he appeared to have just noticed that she was there. He then looked back at Albus. 'Why? What happened?'

'She's been suspended for a month. She attacked another student.'

'Well, if they deserved it.'

Albus gave his brother a stern look but he ignored it. Rowena couldn't help but smile but it disappeared straight away when Albus looked in her direction.

'Yeah, she can stay with me but why can't she stay here?' Aberforth asked frowning.

'Because she just can't,' Albus repeated.

'Why? Because of Harry?' he asked.

'Partly,' Albus replied.

Aberforth nodded then looked at Rowena. 'Alright, let's go.'

Rowena said a very quick good-bye to Albus before she picked up her things and followed Aberforth into the fireplace. Rowena felt herself spin again and she then found herself in a very run-down room. She knew Aberforth owned a pub, The Hogs Head, this must have been it. She then followed Aberforth upstairs to a small room.

'You can use this room while you're here,' he said hastily. 'If you have questions, ask them tomorrow.'

Rowena nodded and watched him walk down the hall to his own room. Rowena then placed her bags down and she lay on the bed and sighed as she looked up at the ceiling. The paint was chip and it was flaking. She closed her eyes and she fell asleep, still in her clothes.

A few weeks later, Rowena was just about ready to go back to school. She didn't mind being here but there wasn't much to do. She had explored Hogsmeade but there were only so many times in which she could do that. She had gone to the Shrieking Shack a few times. She liked being there, it was a serene place.

She hadn't really had much of a chance to speak with Aberforth, he was busy with his bar and Rowena couldn't help but notice that there were quite a few goats around. She hoped nothing indecent was going on but she did suspect something.

There were questions that Rowena wanted to ask Aberforth. She was sure he would give her the answers that she wanted and half-way through her last week she got her chance. She was sitting in Aberforth's room at the end of the hall on the second floor. She was sitting in an armchair in the corner and Aberforth was sitting on the other side, not far from her though. They were both drinking a glass of mead. Rowena knew if Albus knew this he might hit the roof.

When Rowena turned her head, she noticed a large portrait hanging on the wall. It was of a young girl. She was beautiful, she had long, blonde hair and... blue eyes.

'Is that a portrait of your sister?' Rowena asked.

'You know about Ariana?' he asked back.

Rowena shook her head. 'Not really. I only know her name and that she's your sister. Albus wouldn't tell me anything beyond that.'

'I'm not surprised,' Aberforth murmured.

'Can you tell me about her? What happened?'

'I suppose. When Ariana was young she was attacked by three Muggle boys who saw her doing magic. I think they were scared or something. Ariana was only six years old when it happened. After it, she refused to use her magic and when she was feeling a strong emotion it would burst from her like an angry volcano.'

‘What happened to her?’

‘She died when she was about fourteen.’

‘How?’ Rowena pressed.

‘By a spell. I don’t know who casted it but I still blame Albus. If he hadn’t become friends with Grindelwald in the first place then it wouldn’t have happened at all.’

Grindelwald, Rowena had heard the name before. Her mind clicked. He was the dark wizard that Albus fought in a famous duel in the mid-forties. ‘They were friends?’ Rowena asked bewildered.

Aberforth nodded. ‘Yes. Albus and he were fighting and it upset Ariana and there was a huge commotion and it happened.’

‘What about your parents?’ Rowena asked next.

‘Our father was imprisoned in Azkaban for attacking the three Muggles boys that attacked Ariana. He died there. And our mother was killed by Ariana, accidentally of course.’

‘Do you miss Ariana?’ Rowena asked.

‘All the time,’ he replied sadly.

Rowena took the last sip of her mead and she placed the glass on the small table in the middle of the room and she then shifted in her chair. ‘Does Albus have a pet Phoenix?’

‘Yes. You saw him, didn’t you?’

‘Yeah, but I thought my eyes were tricking me.’

Aberforth chuckled faintly. ‘No, it’s a Phoenix. Albus has had him for a while.’

Rowena nodded. Why did Albus keep all that information from her? Was he ashamed of his past? Of his family? She felt a little hurt that he wouldn't share it with her.

It was now quiet between Rowena and Aberforth. They sat together in silence for a while before more was said. 'How do you feel about finding out about your real father?' Aberforth asked his eyes focused on her face.

Rowena shrugged. 'I'm not really sure how to feel about it, to be honest, but for some reason I don't seem to mind it. When Albus first told me I wanted to sick, I didn't want to be here anymore but the more it sinks in the Ok I feel about it. How strange does that sound?' she said. The question was more to herself than Aberforth.

He understood that but he answered her anyway. 'It isn't strange. Sometimes when you find out something terrible, you realise that it's not so bad after a while, just like most things.'

'Yeah, I suppose,' Rowena said looking away.

She lost herself in her own thoughts and she wanted to stay there but she eventually pulled herself out and she said good-night to Aberforth and she slowly walked to her room. She changed into her pyjamas and lay down on her bed and she pulled the covers up to her neck.

She rolled onto her side so that she faced the wall. A small, singular tear ran down the side of her face and disappeared into her hair. All she wanted was for Albus to say that he was proud of her and that he loved her but that seemed a fair way off. Rowena had a strong feeling that it wasn't going to happen any time soon. She just felt that no matter what she did, it was never good enough for him.

The next week, Rowena returned to school through the fireplace again. She looked around the headmaster's office. He wasn't alone, Alisa was there too. She was hugging herself and she was looking everywhere except where Rowena now stood.

'I think you have something to say, Miss Riddle,' Professor Dobtcheff said firmly.

Rowena nodded slowly and she licked her lips. She looked at Alisa and took a quick, deep breath. 'I'm sorry for what I did to you,' she said clearly.

'Accepted,' Alisa said without delay.

She looked like she just wanted to get out of the room. The headmaster nodded at her and Alisa left the room. The door closed behind her and Rowena looked up at Dobtcheff. 'I hope nothing like this happens again, Miss Riddle,' he said moving to his desk.

'It won't,' Rowena assured him.

'Good. You may go to your dorm room and one more thing; Professor Baransti has given you one detention, which is for tomorrow night.'

Inside, Rowena was seething. She wanted nothing more than for Baransti to go away or die, or maybe both. Rowena shook herself from her deep thoughts and she grabbed her bag and she left the office. She walked down the corridor slowly and she went straight to her dorm room. She placed her bag in the wardrobe. She wasn't in the mood right now. She went straight to bed.

The next night after dinner Rowena made her way to Professor Baransti's office. When she was there she knocked on the door loudly and she heard his voice telling her to enter. She opened the door and looked into the office. Baransti was sitting behind his desk; he appeared to be marking homework.

'Come in, Miss Riddle. I have some lines for you.'

'Isn't that a little tedious?' she asked.

Baransti's head snapped up. 'Don't get lippy,' he said abruptly. 'Sit down, next to me and write I must not attack others students and write it until I tell you to stop.'

Rowena bit her lip as she walked to the chair beside her teacher and she sat down. She didn't like being this close to him. She could smell

his cologne and it was quite strong, nice but strong. She frowned and picked up the quill and began writing.

After three hours, she was still writing and her hand was beginning to cramp. Her writing slowed down and Baransti noticed. 'You can write faster than that.'

'My hand is cramping,' she complained.

'I don't really care. You deserve this for attacking a student. Now, keep going.'

After another few hours, Rowena was still there. Baransti had finished his marking and he was now watching Rowena as she wrote. Her hand felt like drying cement, her wrist felt like it could easily break. She could feel Baransti's eyes on her and it made her very uncomfortable.

'I have heard that you're the Dark Lord's daughter,' he commented absently. He was holding his wand and playing with it like a child. Rowena saw it from the corner of her eye but she ignored it and kept on writing.

'I'm surprised he has a child at all and especially that he doesn't know about you. Well, he might now, I'm not sure,' Baransti continued. 'I see some evil traits in you.'

Rowena ignored that as well and she kept on writing. Though, it appeared Baransti wasn't finished. He picked up a silver goblet on his desk and drank from it. 'You know, you'd be quite pretty if you smiled or went out into the sun a little more.'

Rowena's jaw clenched and her fingers holding the quill turned white as she gripped it tightly. Baransti moved closer to her and he whispered to her. 'Or if you wore make-up.'

To Rowena, the tension in the room grew. She was at the end of her rope with him right now and he was pushing it. Baransti placed a hand on Rowena's thigh and she jumped out of her seat, hitting Baransti's arm on the way, knocking his wand from his grasp. It was

the last straw. She ran from the room and ran straight back to her dorm room.

She slammed the door and leaned against it. She was panting and she felt that her cheeks were hot. She knew she could tell the headmaster, but who would believe her? She wasn't sure what to do but she did know that this teacher had to go. He had to be removed from the school and Rowena knew of only one way in which it would happen.

On Tuesday morning, Rowena's first class was potions. She went down earlier and she looked through the past potions that she had made. She found a confusing and befuddlement Draught that she made a couple of years ago. She thought this one would be fine, the potion wasn't made for the teacher, she made it when she had finished her in class one. She placed the potion on one of the desks and then went back to the cupboard, she was looking for aconite, it was an extremely poisonous plant and it would do just fine.

She went found it after a few moments and went back to the desk and she opened the small vial, which contained clear liquid. He wasn't going to know what hit him. As she shredded up the plant she jumped and looked towards the door. She could hear footsteps but they walked past the door and died down. Rowena didn't move for another moment, her heart was beating rapidly.

She didn't want to know why someone else was coming down here, unless it was the teacher or another student but class wasn't starting for another twenty minutes. When she finished shredding the plant and grinded it and mixed it with the confusing and befuddlement Draught, it hissed slightly but then died down. Rowena was happy that the liquid remained clear. It would be hard to detect.

She placed the top back on the vial and placed within her robes and she went back to her dorm room to collect her books for her potions class. She knew she should have taken them with her but she was careful not to be seen on the way from the dungeons. She returned to the classroom and she waited.



She went through the day and her classes like normal but her last class today was charms. It was too perfect. She put all her things back in her dorm room and she made her way to the charms classroom. She placed a silencing charm within the room and she made her way to the small flight of stairs which led to Baransti's office. All she could hope now was that he wasn't there.

She opened the door noiselessly and poked her head inside. It was empty. The desk was clear of mess and the floor was clean. She looked around. There was a cabinet in the room. She smiled; she could use that if needed. She approached the desk and looked it over. Baransti had a personal silver goblet which sat on the desk and he drank from it at night time. She saw him pick it up last night in detention but at the time she had thought nothing of it.

She looked into it. There was still something in it and it didn't look old. It looked like alcohol and it looked as though it had been newly poured. Rowena jumped and faced the door. Someone had entered the charms classroom; her silencing charm had been broken. She quickly took the vial from her robes and poured it into the goblet. It hissed and bubbled a few times before settling. The footsteps in the charms room was getting louder.

She closed the vial and put it back in her robes. She opened the top of the cabinet and she got into it. Just as she closed it the office door opened and Baransti walked in. He stopped in the door frame and looked around as though something was wrong. He frowned but then shrugged. It must have been nothing. Rowena smiled but it quickly turned to fear as Baransti walked past the cabinet. She almost yelped, thinking he was going to open it.

Baransti walked around to his desk and he sat down and began some more marking before he was to teach another class. Rowena breathed silently and she watched through the small crack. After a few minutes Baransti picked up his goblet and Rowena squinted as she silently urged him to drink it. As though hearing her thoughts Baransti smelt the contents of the goblet.

Rowena thought he might detect it but he didn't. He just shrugged again and he took a big gulp of his drink. Rowena wanted to cry out in

victory but she still stayed silent. She needed to see that it was working before she made her move. Baransti frowned as he swallowed the goblets contents and he put the goblet down gently. It was perfect. It worked almost instantly.

Baransti cried out and he leaned back in his chair. Apparently, getting poisoned was quite painful. He began to cough; blood and vomit came out and smeared across his face. Now, Rowena couldn't get the smile off her face. He was now choking and struggling for air. He reached for his wand but Rowena opened the cabinet and jumped out and she disarmed her teacher quickly.

'Y-you,' he choked out.

Rowena smiled evilly. She moved closer and stood over him. 'You deserve to die and you deserve to die slowly and painfully.'

He coughed again but Rowena moved and then looked down at him again. 'That's what you get for harassing me and being inappropriate. You should have learnt some manners years ago. I've had enough of you and I must say the revenge is sweet.'

Baransti continued to struggle and choke as he looked up at his student. 'Enjoy your death,' she said softly. She dropped his wand at his feet and she moved away. She opened the office door and looked back at her teacher. His face was pale, turning a bluish grey and was covered in his own blood and vomit and his eyes looked like they were ready to pop out of their sockets.

Rowena waved her wand around quickly many times, she wanted to leave no trace of her being here now. Rowena turned her back on him and she walked out the door as her professor died.

Feeling a little desperate - Please Review.

## Chapter Four – An Unfortunate End

There was only one person in the Gryffindor common room this evening and it was Harry Potter. He was sitting at the table finishing his potions essay which is due tomorrow. Ron had offered to stay up with him but Harry just told him to go to bed and not worry about it. He would be fine on his own.

He paused for a moment and placed his quill down on the long roll of parchment. He removed his glasses from his nose and he rubbed his eyes thoroughly with his fingers. He was tired but he knew this had to be finished. Snape wouldn't like it if it was late but Harry knew he wasn't going to get a good mark anyway. It was a bitter cycle that he went through most weeks.

He placed his glasses back on his nose and he pushed them up. He picked the quill up again and he looked down at what he had already written, which wasn't very much. He flicked the quill around his fingers as he thought and it eventually came to him. He wasn't the best at potions but it wasn't easy to concentrate on when your teacher hated you more than anything.

Suddenly, Harry gasped out loud and he dropped the quill, making a line on the parchment as it landed. It was the lightning bolt scar on his forehead that caused his sudden actions. When the pain subsided, he looked around him, there was no-one around. It was late; everyone had already gone to bed, even his girlfriend, Ginny. Harry thought about her for a moment before going back to his essay.

After a few more moments, the pain came back and Harry dropped his quill again and he pressed his hands to his forehead. Unconsciously, he slipped from his chair and onto the floor, still holding his head. He lay on his side and gasped as the pain grew in intensity.

He decided to give in and he let the emotions flow through him. At the end of it all he could see Voldemort standing in front of his followers, a ghostly smile present upon his white, thin lips. He was happy, Harry knew that much but he couldn't tell what was being said. Voldemort's

snake, Nagini, crept up his body and around his shoulders and Voldemort stroked it, caressed it gently.

When the pain left again, Harry sat up and gasped for air. What was Voldemort so happy about? Harry had heard the rumours about Voldemort having a daughter but Harry couldn't believe that there was any ounce of truth to it. How could he possibly have fathered a child without knowing it earlier?

Harry had always thought that Dumbledore spread the rumour about his child himself, for what purpose Harry wasn't sure but he knew it wasn't possible for Voldemort to have a child. The thought would be too much to bear. The child would most likely be just like him, wouldn't it?

Harry shook his head and he brought himself back. He stood up and dusted himself off before sitting back down in his chair. He stared down at the table. Now, he couldn't stop thinking about it. If it was true, which Harry highly doubted, how old would the child be now? Surely it would have happened before he tried to kill Harry as a baby?

Harry shook his head again and forced himself to think of other things, though, he couldn't deny that he was confused. But he was sure an answer would reach him soon. He picked his quill back up and went back to his potions essay. He could talk to Dumbledore about this later and see what he had to say. Harry hated the thought of there being another Riddle in the world.

Rowena returned to her dorm room and she slowly and thoughtfully placed her things together for her charms class. She reminded herself not to smile and to act like everyone else. She knew nothing more than anyone else. She picked her things up and placed them gently within her arms. She then left her dorm room and walked to charms class like she always did.

When she arrived only one other student was there. He was sitting at the front and he didn't turn around when she entered the classroom. She silently sat down at the back and she carefully placed her things on the desk and set them up as usual. She then leaned back in her

chair and relaxed until the rest of the class came into the room and took their own seats.

Rowena moved forwards and opened her charms book and she pretended to read it. Ten minutes went by and some people were looking around, waiting for the teacher to arrive while others enjoyed the time off that they were getting. By the time half-an-hour went by some people were now worried and wondering whether something had happened.

Rowena placed her book down and she looked around with everyone else. Dmitri Blackburn, a student in her year, walked over to the office door and knocked on it. Nothing happened and he then pressed his ear against the door, there was no sound on the other side, so he knocked again, nothing happened. He turned to his classmates and shrugged.

‘Go in,’ Alisa said to him.

Dmitri shrugged again and he opened the door cautiously. He poked his head inside and he must have looked around because he suddenly froze. His hand let go of the door and his eyes went wide and his mouth hung open in shock. ‘He’s dead,’ he whispered. No-one heard him. He walked further into the room and looked the teacher over quickly. He almost vomited right there.

He ran out of the office and he grabbed onto the side. He looked down, bewildered, at his classmates. ‘He’s dead,’ he repeated. ‘He’s dead.’

Many people in the class thought he was joking but when he’s facial expression didn’t change many people started to panic. A girl sitting next to Alisa, Alexandra Shalev, stood up and ran out the door. She returned minutes later with the headmaster behind her. His face was grim.

‘I hope this isn’t a prank,’ he said firmly, his eyes darting around the room.

No-one moved or said anything. Alexandra stopped at the bottom of the stairs and the headmaster went up and straight to the office. Many students strained their necks to get a better look.

‘Oh my gods,’ Professor Doltcheff said.

He walked back out of the room and he quickly looked everyone over. ‘Did anyone else go in this room?’

The rest of the class, including Rowena, shook their heads in unison. ‘Good,’ the headmaster breathed. ‘I need you all to go back to your dorm rooms and stay there.’

Everyone did as they were told. Rowena picked up her things and she went straight to her dorm room. She lay on her bed and looked back at the dull ceiling. She hadn't thought about what this might do to the school. She was sure they would keep it open but when some parents found out, they might take their children home, thinking there was a murderer at Durmstrang.

Rowena went down for dinner a few hours later, but there were only a handful of students there. William looked over and he watched Rowena walk over and sit down. They said nothing to each other. William looked quite sick. When she finished eating she went back to her dorm room and spent the rest of the night reading her library books.

In the morning, a broadcast over the PA system informed all students and teachers to report to the hall for an announcement. Rowena was sure the headmaster was going to tell everyone what happened, though most people already knew.

Rowena walked into the hall and it already looked as though everyone was here. She stood at the back and listened. Headmaster Doltcheff stepped forwards. ‘Attention, please.’

All noises in the room stopped and the headmaster now had everyone's attention. ‘I am sorry to inform you of the death of Professor Roger Baransti. He died earlier today, in his office while marking some homework.’

Rowena looked around. Some people were visibly upset and crying while some just looked distressed. Rowena felt nothing though. She crossed her arms across her chest and she kept her eyes on Dobtcheff.

‘We’re still unsure of how Professor Baransti died but all we know is that something made him sick and he choked. Please do not be alarmed, we are sure this was an accident. Your parents and guardians have been informed and some are coming here later tonight to see you. Please try and have a good day.’

Rowena left the hall first and she went straight back to her dorm room to get her things for today’s classes. She was going to have a good day. Baransti was gone and she no longer had to be humiliated or blamed by him.

Later that night, when Rowena went into the hall again, she noticed many parents were there and she quickly spotted Albus in the corner speaking to the headmaster. She walked over and they ceased talking. Rowena looked between them but she said nothing.

‘Are you alright?’ Albus asked.

Rowena silently nodded. The headmaster walked away and Rowena moved closer to Albus. He looked down his long, crooked nose at her. ‘Are you sure?’ he asked.

Again, Rowena nodded and said nothing.

‘There’s nothing you want to tell me?’ Albus said still watching his ward.

‘I’ve already said that I’m fine and no, there is nothing I want to tell you. If you think I did it then why not come out and ask,’ Rowena said heatedly.

‘I don’t think you did it,’ Albus said quietly.

Deep down, Albus was lying. A part of him strongly thought that Rowena did this but he couldn't say why, so he kept quiet. The killing curse wasn't used, so it may be impossible to say what really happened. Rowena wasn't looking at Albus. There was no way she was going to look him in the eyes right now. She knew he was able to perform Legilimency and then he would know everything.

Rowena made a mental note to learn Occlumency sometime, it could come in handy. She looked at a couple of students who walked past talking about Quidditch. She couldn't believe they were talking about that stupid game at a time like this. Though, she did know that the Quidditch season would start next month, in November. Rowena didn't play herself, she had never been interested in the game.

She looked at Albus but still avoided his eye. 'Why are you here?'

'I just wanted to make sure you were alright,' he said gently.

'Couldn't you do it by letter?' she asked quickly.

'Not happy to see me?' Albus asked.

'I didn't say that,' Rowena said. 'I just- you know.' She stopped herself from saying anymore. She didn't want to do this now.

Albus nodded his understanding. 'I shall go back to Hogwarts then and I am glad that you're alright.'

He moved forwards and they both hugged lightly. Rowena closed her eyes. When Albus released her she opened them again. She wasn't much on hugging. He walked to the door then stopped and waved to her slightly and Rowena returned it and Albus left. Rowena's eyes lingered on the door after him.

On the morning of December twenty-first, Rowena woke up to a loud tapping noise outside her window. She looked towards it but it was fogged over. She got out of bed and put her robe on before opening it. There was a large owl outside carrying something large in its talons. Rowena opened the window wider and moved aside so the owl could come in.



It flew into the room and Rowena quickly grabbed the package and the owl holding it let go and flew off again through the window. Rowena walked over to her small desk and she placed the package down. It sounded hollow, like a cage. She took the cover off and she took a quick step backwards, expecting it to be something bad but it wasn't. It was an owl.

Rowena slowly looked it over. She recognised it as a large Eagle owl. She always thought they were beautiful. This one was black and white. On top of the cage there was a small note. The owl looked tired and it watched Rowena as she moved closer. The owl didn't appear too interested. Rowena opened the note.

Dear Rowena, Happy Birthday, I am sorry I'm not there with you. I hope you have a great day and I hope you like your present. His name is Helios, but if you don't like it, you may change it. Love Albus.

Rowena smiled faintly as she re-read the note. It was nice. She put the note in the desk draw and she looked the owl over. He was very handsome and she didn't mind his name, he could keep it. 'Helios,' Rowena said softly.

The owl ruffled its feathers and it looked at her, its big, yellow eyes glowing faintly. Rowena smiled. He was quite beautiful, she loved him. She sat down at the desk and she took out a small sheet of parchment and she wrote a thank you note to Albus. She really did appreciate the present. It was perfect. She undid the cage.

'Ready to go on your first trip?' she asked quietly. He hopped out from the cage and Rowena gently tied the note to his leg. 'Send it back to Albus and come straight back, I'll give you a tasty treat.'

Helios hooted loudly and took off immediately through the still open window. Rowena was happy that it was Saturday, she didn't have to go to class. She had the day to herself but she wasn't sure what to do. She always liked to do something very different on her birthday, but today, she couldn't think of anything. She sat on the bed and sighed. She couldn't wait for the term to be over.

When the Christmas holidays arrived, Rowena felt a strong itch to get her mother's address. The only problem was Albus. She knew he would never give it to her. But it didn't take Rowena long to think of someone else who might. She sat down at her desk and took out a piece of parchment.

To Aberforth, I need something from you. I know Albus wouldn't approve but I'm hoping you could do this without telling him. I would like to know where my mother lives. I need to speak to her and I need to do it alone. Albus would tell me that there is no point in talking to her but I need to, just once. I'm hoping you'll help me. If not, then I'll understand. Rowena.

She looked it over and she gave it to Helios, who took off immediately. Rowena didn't actually know what Albus would say but she was sure she had a pretty good idea. For at least an hour Rowena wandered around her room, waiting for an answer but she didn't have to wait long, Aberforth replied to her letter quickly:

Rowena, I know Albus wouldn't approve but I also know you must be curious about your mother and who she is and you have every right to meet her. I was able to get her work address. She owns a bar just outside the village of Little Hangleton. If you go then please be careful, it wouldn't be good for either of us if Albus finds out and don't do anything foolish, Aberforth.

Rowena smiled inwardly. She wasn't planning to do anything foolish, she just want to meet her mother. Was that too much to ask? Rowena took the small ripped piece of parchment in the letter and she looked it over many times. She will go there but she will make sure she's ready to face it first. Every time she looked down at her Muggle Studies textbooks she saw her mother's name and afterwards she couldn't stop thinking about it.

The thought of meeting her made her nervous. She wondered what her mother would think of her, to see how she would react in seeing her. She couldn't imagine what she would think. Rowena knew she had to keep this quiet from Albus. The last thing she needed was for him to be even angrier with her than he already was.

When the Easter holidays arrived, Rowena was packed and ready to make a trip into the Muggle world. She knew what she wanted to say to her mother but whether it would happen how she imagined was something else. She arranged to take a portkey with the headmaster. She lied and he took her word for it that Albus was meeting her at the following destination.

When she arrived she looked around. There wasn't really anything to see. The place looked deserted almost. It was dry and many of the surrounding gardens were neglected and dying. Rowena followed the directions to the pub that her mother owned and she found it quite easily. The outside of the pub was quite nice. Rowena wondered how her mother was able to afford it.

She entered and she was quite amazed. The inside was nicer than the outside. Most of the furniture was wooden and there were many people inside but only a few heads turned when Rowena entered the pub. She made her way to the bar, ignoring the stares and she looked around.

A red haired woman walked over. 'You're a little young, aren't you?'

Rowena looked at the person who spoke. She was tall, had long red hair and warm grey eyes. She had a big, polite smile on her face which showed her white teeth. Rowena was sure this woman could be her mother; the description was Albus was spot on but she had to check. 'I'm looking for Isabelle Baylon,' Rowena said clearly.

'You're talking to her,' Isabelle replied smiling wider.

Rowena's mouth twitched. This was the woman who gave her up when she was a baby. Isabelle was incredibly beautiful. 'Is something wrong, dear?'

'I'm Rowena Riddle,' she told Isabelle.

For a moment, Isabelle looked confused but it eventually came to her. 'My ... daughter?' she questioned looking into Rowena's light brown eyes.

Rowena nodded and Isabelle's smile slowly faded. 'W-what are you doing here?'

'I wanted to meet you,' Rowena said simply.

'You shouldn't be here,' said Isabelle quickly.

'I won't leave without talking to you,' Rowena said firmly.

'Ok,' Isabelle said slowly. 'But it'll have to wait until closing time.'

Rowena nodded and she followed Isabelle to a table in the corner, which was unoccupied. 'Stay here until closing time, and then we can talk,' Isabelle said distractedly.

Rowena did as she was told and she sat at the corner table. She watched as her mother served customers and talked with people here and there. She seemed nice and she was polite. Rowena's eyes followed her for most of the night. After midnight Isabelle closed up and it took her at least forty-five minutes to get a few people out. When it was empty, except for her and Rowena, she walked over.

'We can talk now.'

She walked away and started cleaning the bar area, but she kept looking over at Rowena, as though she couldn't believe that this was real. Rowena stood up and stood a few feet from the bar. 'How old are you now?' Isabelle asked quietly.

'Eighteen,' Rowena replied.

'Wow,' her mother said exhaling sharply. 'Time goes quickly.'

'Why did you give me up?' she then asked abruptly.

Isabelle stopped for a moment and looked at Rowena. She sighed deeply. 'I did hope to never have to answer that question. I never thought you'd find me. By the way, how did you find me? Did your guardian tell you?'

‘No,’ Rowena said shaking her head. ‘His brother told me.’

‘I gave you up because I wasn’t able to look after you. I was only just starting out and I was having trouble looking after myself. I thought you’d be better off in an orphanage and there was an opportunity for you to be taken in by someone looking to have a child. I have met your guardian. He’s older than I thought he would be and I don’t know why he was so interested in adopting you but I’m sure his given you what I couldn’t have.’

‘How many times have you met with him?’ Rowena asked frowning faintly.

Her mother shrugged. ‘I don’t know, only a few times. He showed me a picture of you when you were about three. You were a beautiful child and you’re still beautiful.’

Rowena saw tears in her mother’s eyes but she ignored them. She wasn’t interested in how her mother felt about her, she just wanted answers. ‘But you weren’t interested in actually meeting me?’

Isabelle sighed. ‘Well, not really and besides, your guardian said it would be better this way.’

‘I disagree.’

‘I can see that,’ her mother said sadly.

Rowena paused. She wasn’t sure what to ask next, so she decided to move on. ‘You run this place alone?’ Rowena asked.

Isabelle nodded. ‘Yes. I would hire staff but I’m trying to save at the moment.’

‘What for?’ Rowena asked, her eyes narrowing slightly.

Well,’ Isabelle started slowly. ‘I’m getting married soon and we have a baby on the way.’

Rowena's mouth opened but nothing came out. Isabelle moved out from behind the bar and looked at her daughter. Rowena looked down and all she could do right now was gap at her mother's slightly bulging stomach. 'I'm four months along,' she added.

The thought of her mother having another baby made her feel angry. Her jaw clenched and she held it back for now. She hadn't noticed her mother's stomach until she pointed it out. She hadn't looked down there.

'Were you ashamed about having me?' Rowena asked. She was going back to this. It was important to her.

'I was raped by your father, who is an evil man by the way, and after you were born I saw him when I looked at you. This was better for both of us, not just me,' Isabelle said loudly, the warmth of her eyes disappearing.

'It doesn't feel like it. You did what was convenient for you. My best interest would have been to be with my mother and not raised by a complete stranger,' Rowena said angrily.

'I think you should be leaving now,' Isabelle said quietly, looking around her, which didn't go unnoticed by Rowena.

'I don't think so,' Rowena said. 'Does the guy you're marrying know about your past, about me? Have you told him everything?'

'Of course I haven't. Not even my parents knew that I had you, not even my best friend knew. I wanted to keep you a secret and I don't want it exposed now.'

'It won't have to be,' Rowena said softly. A dark shadow passed over Rowena's face and Isabelle completely moved away from behind the bar and she moved back, away from her daughter. For a fleeting second her eyes glowed scarlet and her pale face contorted itself into resentment. She slowly took her wand out from her robes.

Her mother's eyes widened in horror as she looked at her daughter. 'You're just like him, aren't you?'

Rowena didn't answer her. She couldn't.

She knew she couldn't use the killing curse, there would have to be another way. Her mother continued to moved back but she finally stopped and she became angry and upset. 'Think about what you're doing! I'm pregnant and I have someone waiting for me at home! Don't turn into a monster like your father!'

It didn't work. Isabelle tired another way. 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry I abandoned you when you were a baby but I felt trapped,' she said desperately. 'I'm sorry.'

Just hearing those two words made the anger within Rowena explode and she shrieked in her rage as she slashed her wand in front of her mother, cutting her neck. Her mother screamed and Rowena just watched as she lost her balance and fell to the ground, hitting her head on a wooden table on the way. Her body lay on the ground, bleeding pooling around her, her eyes wide and still open.

Rowena swallowed hard and blinked. What had she done? This wasn't how things were supposed to go, they were supposed to talk and come to an understanding. Rowena lifted her arm and stared at her hand which was shaking uncontrollably. She remained standing where she was and she looked down at her robes. They were splattered with her mother's blood.

When Rowena was able to think clearly she went to the window and looked out. There was no-one there. No-one had heard her mother's screams. She closed the curtains securely and she took an empty vial out of her robes, it was the same one she used with the potion. She had cleaned it thoroughly and placed it back in her robes. She knelt down on the ground and scooped some of her mother's blood into the vial and she placed it back in her pocket.

She then took her wand and removed all traces of her being there. Rowena should never have been here and she knew Albus would immediately suspect her but then Rowena wondered, why would he blame her? She's not even supposed to know where her mother is,

though Aberforth would probably know that it was her. What would she do now? Go back to school and pretend nothing happened?

The more she thought about it, the better the idea sounded. She looked down at her mother, her anger was still there. She bent down again and felt her mother's neck. There was no pulse and she was no longer breathing. Rowena's eyes moved to Isabelle's stomach. She wondered if the baby was still alive or if it had died in there when her mother hit the floor.

Rowena sneered as she thought about the abomination growing in her mother's womb. Her mother didn't deserve to live anymore. She had placed Rowena in this situation. She brought it upon herself. Rowena couldn't think of it any other way. This was how it was meant to be. This was right. She had done the right thing.

She checked the bar over quickly then made her way out the door, glancing at her mother's lifeless body one last time. She smiled and the shadow over Rowena's face darkened.

A/N: I know it moved through time fast, sorry but had nothing else to say in between holidays. Next chapter will be up quicker.



## Chapter Five - Occlumency

The next day, Rowena returned to school. The headmaster was surprised to see her but she explained, convincingly, that she just wanted to come back to school. She would have more time to be home when the school year was over and the headmaster seemed pleased about her reasoning. He no longer questioned it and he went about the rest of his own holidays.

Rowena made for her dorm room straight away and she put everything away slowly, and carefully. She tried not to think about what happened last night. She was sure the Muggle news would be all over it by now. She wondered if the wizarding world would be hearing about the murder, maybe they would blame her father, or his followers for the murder.

When Rowena left her dorm room, there were a few people in the common room. They all looked over quickly and they then looked away just as fast, they must have been expecting someone else. She stopped when she reached the door as someone called her name. She turned. It was Alexandra.

Rowena slowly made her way over to where they were sitting and she sat in an unoccupied armchair. Most of them eyed her suspicious before saying anymore. This was the first time she had been included in a discussion before. She looked at the students here. Two were in her year, which were Alexandra and Alisa; three of them were sixth years, Elena Ivanov, Egor Majidis and Elizabeth Bastia. Rowena knew that Elena and Egor were dating, they sat next to each other on a small sofa and there were two fifth year students Valya Montero and Arkady Darkwood.

Rowena had never really spoken to any of them in great length before. The only person she had frequent talks with was William but he went back to Australia for the holidays. It made her wonder if he really liked coming to this school or if there was another reason he came here. Rowena didn't believe it was because of her. Alisa once accused William of liking her but Rowena wasn't sure it was the truth.

'I think it was just a horrible accident,' Egor statement firmly. Rowena turned her head to look at him. He wasn't bad looking; he had longish black hair and grey eyes. His face was set but he was holding Elena's hand gently. Elena looked at him when he spoke. Rowena then looked her over. She was quite short for her age, with short, wavy brown hair and green eyes and faint brown freckles across her nose.

'What?' Elizabeth snapped back. 'He didn't just die from nothing. He wasn't stupid.'

Elizabeth had transferred to this school from Beauxbatons, she was expelled in her third year and this was the only other school that would take her. When she first arrived she was very shy and quiet but now, that she had gotten used to people, she was different. She talked more often and always gave her opinion, which was always strong. Rowena thought she was quite plain looking, blonde hair and brown eyes and a slight tan. Rowena didn't think she was French though, she had no accent.

Rowena's eye caught something. She turned her head in the direction and her eyes met with Alisa's. Her eyes were narrow and she was glaring at Rowena with her arms folded loosely across her chest. 'Why did you come back to school so soon? I thought you were going home?' said Alisa.

'I did. I decided to come back early,' replied Rowena politely.

'Why?' Alisa asked

'Does it matter? It's my business,' Rowena said quietly.

The others in the room looked between them nervously. They did know what happen between them before. Rowena was surprised that they weren't running for their lives, unless they weren't told the whole story. The room had gone very quiet.

'Is it true about you? Are you really You-Know-Who's daughter?' asked Elizabeth.

'Yes,' Rowena said softly, nodding.

A couple people gasped. 'Have you met him?' Egor asked eagerly.

'No.'

They let the subject drop. 'What do you think happened to Professor Baransti?' asked Alexandra.

Rowena paused as she thought about her answer. Unbeknownst to the people in this room, she was the one who killed him. She still felt the same happiness she felt then when she thought about it. It always cheered her up when she needed it but, of course, she couldn't tell her classmates that.

'I would say he choked on something,' Rowena said simply.

'Why?' Elizabeth asked frowning.

Rowena looked at Elizabeth again. All of her attention was focused on Rowena, who was now doing some rapid thinking. It wouldn't do her any good to get caught now. Things were going so well. 'He was covered in his own vomit; he must have vomited and then choked on it in turn.'

'What about all the blood on him?' Elena asked. It was the first time she had spoken tonight. She had just sat there and listened to everyone's conversation.

'How do you know there was blood on him?' Rowena asked.

Her question made everyone look at her. She shifted in her seat uncomfortably. 'Well,' she struggled. 'How do you know?'

Rowena smiled inwardly. She was trying to turn it around, put all the attention back onto Rowena. She wasn't going to have that. 'My guardian told me. Professor Dobtcheff told him what happened and then he told me, he thought I had a right to know.'

'Why not tell us then?' Egor asked.

‘What for? This is the first time I’ve really spoken to any of you,’ said Rowena calmly.

‘She’s right,’ Arkady said quietly.

He hadn't said anything until now either but Rowena knew he was always quiet. He never really said anything. ‘So, what about the blood?’ Alexandra asked frowning.

‘I can't explain that,’ Rowena said not looking at any of them.

The rest of them shook their heads too, indicating that they didn't know either. The room went quiet again. No-one had anything else to say. Rowena didn't think there even was anything else to say. What happened to him was sad and tragic but it happened for a reason. Rowena smiled faintly.

‘Didn't you have a detention with Baransti the night before?’ asked Alisa, breaking the long silence.

Rowena knew what she was getting at. If only they knew how close they really were to the truth, but they never realised it, it never occurred to them to think that someone among them could have done it. But no-one would want to know if they're right near a murderer, would they? It would be a terrifying thought.

‘Yes, I did. But I didn't notice anything different about him. He was his normal self,’ Rowena said evenly.

‘Are you sure?’ Egor asked.

Rowena just nodded. In her detention Baransti was being more like himself every second. He seemed like a good man on the outside but only Rowena was sure about what he was like deep inside. He was nothing more than a swine. He deserved what he got and if Rowena could do it again she would, without a moment's hesitation.

Nothing more was said in the group and Rowena then returned to her dorm room. Before she had been thinking about going to see Professor Sevnik. There was something Rowena wanted to learn and

she couldn't do it alone. She needed someone who was able to teach it to her properly. She didn't want Albus to continue his entering into her mind without permission. It was annoying and it had to stop. He has already refused to teach her, so Rowena was going to find her own way to learn it.

Though she decided it could wait for tomorrow. She still had a week and a half left of the holidays; there was still plenty of time. She lay down in bed and rolled onto her side and looked up at the window. She hadn't closed the curtains. She loved the moonlight.

The next afternoon, Rowena walked down to the Dark Arts office. She knocked on the office door. It took eight minutes for Sevnik to open the door. Rowena couldn't help but wonder what she was doing. She seemed quite startled to see Rowena at her door.

'Oh, Miss Riddle, how can I help you?'

Rowena frowned a little as Sevnik ran her hands in her hair, smoothly it back. She appeared nervous. 'I was just wondering if you could help me with something... unless, you're busy, Professor,' Rowena said slowly.

She tried to look beyond her teacher but she saw nothing. It was completely dark. Rowena changed her facial expression and put on her blank look. Her teacher looked around her a quick moment. 'Yeah, I could help you but I think you should come back in a few hours.'

'Very well, Professor,' Rowena said politely.

She walked away from the door and she walked down the corridor. She was going to return to her dorm room but she wanted to know why her Dark Arts teacher was acting so suspicious. She got along with this teacher well, but Rowena still didn't know her very well.

She stood behind a pillar and she waited. When she heard a door creak open she peered her head around it. It was now quite dark and Rowena could only just make out who the people were. Sevnik came out to the corridor from her classroom and she looked around. She then turned back to her room and she waved for someone to come

out but Rowena was shocked as Professor Gauk and Professor Yudina came out.

Rowena frowned as she continued to watch, why were her History of Magic teacher and Potions teacher with Sevnik? Rowena thought it was only one person and that they were sleeping together but she felt confused by this. Were they having a threesome? Were the three of them in a relationship together?

The other two teachers walked away in separate directions and Sevnik returned to her office. Rowena waited another half-an-hour before going back and knocking on the door. Sevnik seemed more relaxed this time and she smiled at Rowena when she saw her. 'Miss Riddle, you're very keen, aren't you?'

Rowena smiled automatically. 'Well, this is something I need to learn,' she said softly.

Sevnik moved back and held her office door open. 'Then come on in, Miss Riddle.'

Rowena nodded her head once and walked through the door. The office still looked the same as the last time she was here but Rowena still felt like something was going on. She walked near the desk and Sevnik joined her. She sat behind her desk and gestured to Rowena to sit down, which she did.

'So,' Sevnik breathed profoundly. 'What is it that you want to learn?'

'Occlumency,' Rowena said quietly.

Her answer surprised Sevnik who placed her elbows on the table and leaned forwards. 'Why would you want to learn it? It's never been learned easily by anyone.'

'I'll be honest, Professor, my guardian can do Legilimency and I want him to stay out of my head when I look at him,' she said truthfully.

'I see,' said Sevnik. She rubbed her cheek with her hand gently before laying her arm across the table. She kept her eyes on Rowena without blinking much.

'I would also appreciate it if this could stay private for now,' Rowena added softly.

'Of course, Miss Riddle,' Sevnik said smiling. 'Well, I have some time now, would you like to start tonight?'

Rowena nodded. 'Yes, that would be great.'

'Good. Now, let's just moved to the classroom, there'll be more room.'

She nodded again and followed her teacher down to the classroom. Sevnik cleared the desks in the room and she turned and faced her student. 'Are there any memories you don't want me to see?'

Rowena then knew what she had to hide. She nodded numbly. 'Yeah, a couple, they're not bad, they're just embarrassing.'

'I understand.'

Rowena watched as her Dark Arts teacher went back to her office and she came back holding a large, round, heavy looking object. Rowena hadn't seen one before but she guessed it was pensieve.

'This is a pensieve,' Sevnik said. 'You can take the memories out and put them in there. They'll remain the same. Just put your wand to your temple and concentrate hard on the memory, then pull your wand away and the memory should go with it.'

Rowena nodded and Sevnik placed it on her classroom desk. Rowena approached it and she put her wand to her temple. She took out two memories, killing Baransti and killing her mother. If Sevnik saw them then it would be the end, she would be found out to be a murderer, though Rowena didn't consider herself to be one. When she finished she looked back at Sevnik who was patiently waiting.

'Ok, let's try it one time. Ready?'

Rowena nodded but said nothing.

‘Legilimens,’ Sevnik shouted.

When the spell hit, it wasn’t what Rowena was expecting. She was immediately swarming in her own memories and she couldn’t control it. When it ended she realised her eyes were closed, she opened them and found herself kneeling on the floor with her hands over her ears.

‘That’s what it feels like when someone breaks into your mind. Once you learn this, it will get easier. So, tell me, do you know what Occlumency actually is?’

Yes,’ she said nodding, ‘it’s learning how to block your mind from magical penetration.’

‘That is correct,’ Sevnik said. She looked quite impressed. ‘In these lessons, I will be teaching you to do just that. I will try to access your mind and you will try to keep me out. Any questions?’

Rowena nodded. ‘How do I keep you out and am I able to access your mind without being able to do Legilimency?’

‘The best way to break into someone’s mind is to know Legilimency. The only other way to break into someone’s mind is when they perform Legilimency on you. You fight back with Occlumency and break into their mind in return. It works as the Legilimency spell is still in effect, it hasn’t yet been broken but if you don’t know Occlumency then it can be almost impossible to do.

‘And to answer your other question, to keep me out of your mind, you have to push me out, mentally. You could also try using a defensive spell which will only work sometimes but once you learn it and can do it without thinking, you can use a defensive spell to easily change the course and go into the other person’s mind.

‘Also, try to clear your mind of everything, all emotion. They will not help you should someone try and enter your mind. Anger, fear, and



sometimes love and worry will help that person break into your mind. The only emotion that I know of that stops it is grief, but it takes something powerful.

‘And remember, if someone enters your mind, they will not do it for fun or for a laugh, breaking into someone’s mind is a personal and draining thing. It can be used to the person’s advantage. When you become more skilled you’ll be able to not only stop them entering but if you had to you could show them something that isn’t entirely truthful.’

When she stopped speaking Rowena went through it all again in her head. It was a lot to take in. ‘You mean show them a fake memory?’ Rowena asked frowning faintly.

Sevnik half nodded and half shrugged. ‘Sort of. It means you’ll normally show them something that is not entirely true, which I mean it’s false but there’s still truth in there. If there isn’t any, the person breaking into the mind knows it’s fake. It has to at least be convincing.’ Sevnik paused. ‘Think of it as a fake memory twisted with a form of truth.’

‘I see,’ Rowena said calmly.

‘Alright then, clear your mind and we’ll try again. Nod when you’re ready.’

Rowena took a deep breath and closed her eyes. She continued to breathe in slowly and gently. She didn’t want to break her rhythm. She opened her eyes and met her teachers’, who was looking back patiently still. She nodded and Sevnik lifted her wand.

‘Legilimens,’ she shouted.

Rowena felt the same feeling as last time. Her memories flooded her mind but after a few moments they began to slow down. Rowena felt like her head twisted as she watched it happen. After a few more moments Sevnik lifted her spell and looked at her student. She was smiling.

‘You are quite gifted,’ she said softly.

Rowena looked around herself. She was still standing in the same place. She hadn't moved even an inch, though she did have her eyes closed. She opened her eyes and looked back at her teacher. ‘But I didn't completely achieve it.’

‘No, but I have never met someone who got that far on their second attempt. It's very impressive. I'm sure even Albus Dumbledore didn't get that far on his second attempt.’

‘Have you met him?’ Rowena asked interestedly.

Sevnik nodded. ‘Yes, I applied for a teaching post at Hogwarts but I was unsuccessful. He told me I had great potential to be a teacher and that I should try again in a few years, but I couldn't wait. I'm ready to teach now and besides, I'm quite glad I got this job here.’

‘Is learning Legilimency harder?’ Rowena asked.

‘Yes, it still depends on the individual but most would say that learning Legilimency is harder, but personally I would disagree. It can be easy to learn if you practice on someone who hasn't learnt Occlumency but it could be uncomfortable for the person you're practicing on. Though when trying to learn on someone who does know Occlumency then they spend a lot of time blocking you, which can be helpful but it makes learning it harder and it takes longer.’

‘Which way did you learn?’

‘Well, as I said I found Legilimency easier to learn as a friend helped me, and he didn't know Occlumency. He said it was uncomfortable but at least it didn't hurt, so, it turned out Ok.’

They tried it again a few more times and each time Rowena found it easier and easier to block her teacher, who appeared quite shocked still. ‘Are you sure it's you in there?’ she asked chuckling. ‘I don't think anyone has gotten it this quickly. But I will say that the more you practice the better and faster you'll get at it. I will admit though, I'm sure there is a lot of natural talent there.’

Rowena wasn't sure what to say. She actually felt quite flattered. She highly respected this teacher. Sevnik had always been nothing but kind to her and Rowena had always greatly appreciated it.

'I think we could end it there. We'll do another lesson when you're ready, just give me a heads up first.'

Rowena nodded and she said a quick, polite goodnight and made her way back to her dorm room. She placed her wand on her bedside table and changed for bed. She lay down on her back and stared up at the ceiling. It was just after midnight. She was grateful that Sevnik was willing to teach her Occlumency. She had wondered if she was learning it unusually fast or if it was sometimes normal.

At the end of the year it became exam time and Rowena was as nervous as hell. She was aware that she knew this stuff but it didn't mean it wasn't nerve-racking. She studied for her exams thoroughly and she made sure she remembered everything. She was more worried about the theory part more than the practical. She knew she was good at spells.

When the exams started she sat in the hall with her head bowed. Alisa sat in front of her, William behind and Alexandra on her side, the other side was a wall. Rowena was surprised that she got through the theory as well as she did. For the practical the students were called back into the hall and placed with a ministry official who would be testing them.

Rowena and a few others had to wait for the English speaking official to call them. William went in long before she did and when he came back out he looked a little defeated. When Rowena's name was called she took a deep breath and walked in confidently. She shook hands with the tester.

She had to perform a disarming spell, stunning spell and many others. Rowena was even more confident when it was over. She was sure she performed them all with proficiency.

Her time at Durmstrang was almost over and she knew her results would come back in a week, and then they would have their graduation party. Rowena did wonder if Albus would be coming to that but she wasn't going to hold her breath. She knew he was the headmaster of Hogwarts, he had responsibilities there but Rowena couldn't help but hate it a little. She needed his support too.

She walked over to William in the common room when her tests were all done. He was sitting on the sofa with his head in his hands. Rowena couldn't help but feel a little bad for him. She walked over and sat next to him. 'I'm sure it's not as bad as you're expecting.'

William looked up at the person who spoke. He then looked ahead and shook his head. 'No, I think it's worse.'

It went quiet between them already. Rowena wasn't any good at this. She was about to move when William spoke. 'Are you going to the graduation?'

'Yes, of course.'

William suddenly appeared nervous. 'We could go together.'

That wasn't what Rowena was expecting. She moved back suddenly at the suggestion. She had to be careful about what she said now. 'Look, William, I think you're a good person but I'm not looking for any of that right now.'

'You don't even see me as a friend?' he asked. He was looking at her in a shocked and hurt expression.

Rowena opened her mouth but nothing incoherent came out. For once she was lost for words; she had no idea what to say. She had never been in this position before. And she couldn't believe that Alisa had been right. She did hope that he still wasn't coming all the way to this country for school. Rowena was quite sure there would be a wizarding school in Australia.

William's patience ran out quickly and he left and went to his own dorm room, locking the door behind him. He was no longer interested

in talking or even looking at her. Rowena stood up and looked around. No-one else was in the room. She walked to her own dorm room and sat down on the bed. She didn't know how to feel after that. It was a first for her.

She sighed deeply and wondered if there was something she should have said. She didn't know he felt anything for her, but maybe he should have been more obviously or actually said something to her instead of just pretending they were friends. Rowena couldn't help but roll her eyes and collapse on her bed. This was why she didn't care for most people. It made life complicated.

## Chapter Six - Graduation

It was three days before the graduation party at Hogwarts but not too many people felt like celebrating. Voldemort was active again and Harry and the others were expecting him to attack soon but they weren't sure when it was coming. Harry himself knew that he was going to be the one to face Voldemort at the end of all things but he wasn't sure if that time was now. It seemed too soon.

The killings around Muggle parts was becoming too frequent for it to be a coincidence, Harry knew this. He and Ginny were still together and so were Ron and Hermione, though Harry did feel himself looking around lately. He couldn't help but wonder what or who was still out there for him to meet.

He sat in the common room with Hermione, Ron and Ginny and they all were waiting. Hermione was busy trying to find the right station on the small radio; they wanted to hear if there was any more news. Hermione cried out audibly as she found it.

'There have been some more murders in the last week. A Muggle family of five were found dead in their home, they appeared to have been scared to death, which the rest of us can gather the killing curse was used. The people responsible are not yet known but the Aurors are still out searching. No-one has yet had a confirmed sighting of You-Know-Who but we will keep you posted.

'On other news, we have heard many reports of You-Know-Who's daughter, which most people believe to be a rumour. Personally, I think it's true, I mean who would make something like that up? It has been reported that she has just finished her education at Durmstrang and is on her way home, which is here in England. Wizards in Godric's Hollow have told the press they have seen her at the old Dumbledore estate, which I'm sure most people will find worth talking about and shocking at the same time. Stay tuned for more news shortly.'

The radio went quiet and Harry looked around at the others. They were all looking at each other. No-one knew what to say. Harry couldn't believe he was wrong. What if Voldemort really did have a

daughter? Harry knew that there was a good chance she would be just like her father. All Harry hoped for now was that she was more like her mother, whoever she was.

‘What if Voldemort does have a daughter?’ Hermione asked quietly.

Harry instantly looked at her worried face. He shrugged. He had been thinking the same thing. ‘I don’t know. We have to be careful. I’m sure Dumbledore knows about her then, he must. He was the one who started the rumour which apparently has turned out to be true.’

‘Maybe Dumbledore doesn’t know her,’ Ginny suggested.

‘But then why would she be seen at his family estate in Godric’s Hollow?’ Harry asked. He felt a little irritated by that question. It seemed quite obvious to him.

Ginny didn’t expect that and it hit her hard, her face lit up with shock which was mixed with hurt from the tone of his voice. Ron and Hermione exchanged glances but they kept quiet for a while.

‘Does Dumbledore even live there anymore?’ Ron asked after a long silence.

Harry and the others shrugged. ‘Well, he still owns it,’ Hermione said after a moment’s thought. ‘I mean, he might not live here all year round.’

‘Yeah... maybe,’ Harry said.

He was quite lost in his own thoughts. If Voldemort does have a daughter and Dumbledore does know about her then why has he kept it a secret from him? Would it be bad for them to know each other? It made him wonder if the rest of the Order knows about her and has met her yet. What do they think of her? Harry was quite sure he could imagine what she’d look like.

He jumped out of his thoughts as the radio crackled to life again.

'We have very new reports that Death Eaters were seen entering Hogsmeade a short time ago. A few people living there have called in to report this news and I hear the Ministry is sending Aurors there now. Most people believe they are making their way up to Hogwarts. Where You-Know-Who is, I don't know. No-one has reported seeing him with his followers.'

Harry now saw slight fear on the faces of his friends. He felt quite the same way. Harry stood up and the others followed his lead. 'I think we should find out what's going on,' Harry said firmly.

The others nodded and Harry led the way down to the Great Hall. Most people from the Order of the Phoenix were already there. Harry looked around the room. Dumbledore was at the front, talking to McGonagall and a few other teachers, Sirius was there talking to Remus and Tonks and the Weasley's were all standing together. Harry walked over to Remus, Sirius and Tonks.

He looked up at his god-father. 'What's going on?' he said hurriedly.

'Voldemort's on his way, we're sure,' Sirius replied. 'Though, I'm not sure whether the Aurors will arrive in time but we'll see what happens.'

'They shouldn't be able to get too far,' Remus said looking around the room.

The battle started quickly and it all happened out on the grounds. Harry battled a group of four Death Eaters with friends while the Order handled the rest. It almost ended as quickly as it had started. Voldemort placed a large shield charm over himself and his followers and the Order placed their wands at their sides and they all came together and stood silently beside one another.

Dumbledore stood in the middle and he and Voldemort locked eyes. 'I want my daughter, Dumbledore,' Voldemort said clearly.

'She isn't here, Tom,' Dumbledore replied.

'Liar,' Voldemort breathed dangerously.



'She isn't here, Tom,' Dumbledore repeated. He spoke firmly, yet calmly.

'Tell me where she is,' Voldemort said after a long, heavy silence.

'I'm afraid I cannot do that,' Dumbledore said, still calmly.

'Why?' asked Voldemort.

'Because she is safer where she is. I will not have you corrupting her.'

Voldemort laughed. It was high and cold. 'Me? Corrupt her? If she is my daughter then she won't need me to do anything, she will do it fine on her own.'

'I don't think so,' Dumbledore said softly.

Voldemort laughed again. He seemed to be enjoying himself. He couldn't believe how foolish and ignorant this old man really was. He trusted too many people, it was a mistake. His daughter will not be kept from him. He will get her.

'I will take my leave then but remember, Dumbledore, you cannot protect her forever, this isn't over,' Voldemort said in a low voice.

Voldemort turned and he walked into the Forbidden Forest, his Death Eaters following seconds after. The shield charm disappeared and the Order looked around at each other. No-one could believe how quick that went.

Dumbledore's eyes narrowed as he looked to where Voldemort had just left. All these years, he had been after Harry and now he was suddenly uninterested, but Dumbledore knew it wouldn't last. He would come back for Harry but first he needed Rowena. Dumbledore promised himself that he would not allow that to happen.

On the night of the graduation Rowena spent an hour getting ready. She knew some girls had been getting ready since early in the afternoon. She didn't understand why it took some of them so long.

She moved to the middle of her room and looked at her reflection in the floor length mirror. Rowena was wearing a long, black dress which touched the floor and she decided to leave her hair out. She skipped the make-up and jewellery part.

She touched her pale skin and she lost herself within her reflection. She loved the colour of her skin, it was pretty and pale. She shook her head and placed the mirror away with her wand. She then moved to her bed and sat down to put her shoes on.

Rowena did wish that Albus was coming but he wasn't. He sent her a short letter saying he was sorry and not able to make it. He had to stay at Hogwarts. He mentioned that Voldemort was becoming active again and he wanted to stay near the school and Harry. Rowena couldn't help but feel a little angry at reading that. She wanted him to be here when she officially graduated.

Rowena finished putting her shoes on and stood up quickly and grabbed her wand, securing it in her small pocket. She then left her dorm room and walked down to the hall. Most students and parent or guardians were already there. Some students went with someone and some didn't, Rowena couldn't understand why you would bother, they'll all be here anyway.

The hall was nicely set up. The floor was covered with a bright red carpet and there were several, small round tables in the room with everyone's name at one seat. The ceiling was covered in balloons of all colours and there were candles around all four walls. Rowena made her way around all tables and she eventually came to the one where she was sitting.

She looked at the two names beside hers and she noticed she was sitting next to William and Alexandra. She had a feeling that William wouldn't like this too much. She tried to think about something else as she sat down and waited for things to begin. She actually wanted this night to be over. She was hoping Albus was going to be here. She kept thinking it would have been better with him here.

When most people began seating themselves, William walked over and he hesitated when he saw Rowena but he moved quickly and sat

down. He didn't look at her. Rowena was sure that he was determined to ignore her but Rowena wasn't going to have that. He wasn't going to ignore her. She wanted to put things right. She never meant to hurt him but shouldn't he have noticed that she wasn't interested.

Food was served once everyone was seated and Rowena didn't eat much. Most people didn't seem to either. Most people were interested in talking to friends and laughing and some people were quickly getting up to dance. As soon as he finished eating, William left the table and Rowena noticed that he left the room. She slightly rolled her eyes and went to follow him.

He was standing outside in the grounds, it was spring, but it was still quite cool. William was leaning against one of the walls and looking in the opposite direction of where Rowena was standing. Rowena walked over and William moved off the wall and started to walk away.

'There isn't very far you can go,' Rowena shouted after him.

She sighed irritably and made her way to William quickly. She grabbed the sleeve of his dress robes and pulled him back to door.

'What are you doing? Get off me,' he said unsuccessfully pushing her off.

William didn't push her off until they were back in the entrance hall. 'Look, I'm sorry about the other night, but I'm not looking for someone right now. You're a great person and I'm sure you'll make someone very happy.'

William said nothing.

'There must be someone else you like,' Rowena said quickly.

'I think Alisa's alright, but she hates me too.'

'I don't hate you,' Rowena said truthfully. 'But I'm not looking for a relationship, like I just told you. By the way, I'm sure if you just talk to Alisa alone, she might listen to you.'

'Yeah, maybe,' he replied.

Rowena sighed again and took him back into the hall by his sleeve. She walked them over to the dance floor and Rowena put her arms around his neck. His eyes went wide. He didn't touch her. It seemed like he was afraid to touch her.

'You can touch me, William,' she said softly. 'But don't get any ideas. One dance, and that's it.'

He nodded and placed his hands on her waist. Rowena couldn't lie to herself, she didn't like this too much. It was very uncomfortable being this close to someone. She couldn't wait for the song to end but she wanted to give William something, no matter how small it seemed now. If she led him on then she felt a little bad about that. She had never meant too.

When the song ended Rowena immediately removed her arms from him and she gave him a small smile before moving away. She walked back to her table and she watched as everyone else had a good time. All she wanted to do was leave. She thought the night would be better than I was turning out to be. Near the end of the night she saw William and Alisa talking alone in one of the corners. They eventually moved and went to the dance floor.

A couple hours later, Rowena returned to the common room and she stopped instantly. William and Alisa were there. They were sitting on one of the sofas, touching and kissing each other. Rowena said a soft apology and made her way to her dorm room. She closed the door silently and sat on her bed. She looked at the now closed door and she felt strange.

Was she jealous? She knew she didn't like William in the same way but it was that he seemed to move on so quickly. Was it normal? She frowned to herself and got ready for bed. She was heading home tomorrow.

Rowena knocked on the headmaster's office door and Dobtcheff opened the door promptly. He smiled and let her in. He stood to his

full height and looked at Rowena, still smiling. 'Well, your time's up here,' he said.

Rowena nodded. 'Yes, it is. Thank you for having me a student. I have learnt much here and I will miss this place.'

'I'm glad to hear it. I hope you said good-bye to Professor Sevnik?'

Rowena nodded again. 'Yes, I did. I wouldn't leave without saying something to her.'

Dobtcheff held his hand out and Rowena took it. They shook hands for a moment. 'I wish you great success and say hello to Albus for me.'

'I shall,' Rowena said quietly.

The headmaster threw Floo powder into the fireplace and without much hesitation Rowena stepped through. She spun around for a moment and she was quickly out of another fireplace. She was back at Hogwarts. She looked around and she quickly spotted Albus. He was sitting at his desk, waiting patiently for something and Rowena could only guess that he was waiting for her.

Albus stood up from his desk and walked over to Rowena. He placed his hand on her shoulder and smiled at her. 'I'm sorry I couldn't be there but I think it might not have been a bad idea. Congratulations on graduating, by the way. I'm happy you got through school.'

'Why? Because I was nearly expelled a few times?' Rowena asked smiling slightly.

'Yes, that's exactly why.'

Rowena noticed the look on Albus' face. 'What's wrong?' she asked slowly.

'I think you should sit down. We should talk.'

Rowena closed her eyes and sighed inwardly, she hated these talks with him. She opened her eyes and walked over to the desk and sat down in the chair. Albus sat back down and he looked Rowena over. 'Your father attacked the school a few days ago.'

An alarm rang inside Rowena's head. 'Are you alright?' she asked quickly.

Albus smiled and his blue eyes seemed to twinkle. 'Yes, I am fine, thank you but I am troubled by something.'

Rowena wanted to ask what it was, but she didn't interrupt. Before Albus spoke again, his phoenix flew through the window and made his way to his perch. Rowena felt as though the bird watched her suspiciously. Rowena turned her attention back to Albus.

'Your father was looking for you,' Albus told her, his smiling disappearing.

'What? Why?' Rowena asked quickly.

'He didn't say. He placed a barrier between the two groups and he wanted me to hand you over. I said you weren't here, though he didn't believe me at first. He then called me liar and asked me to tell him where you were, which I could not do of course. He became angry and left. That battle was over before it began. He wasn't interested in Harry then, but of course, he isn't going to forget him. He wants you for the moment.'

It went quiet. Rowena didn't know what to say. Her father wanted to meet her, he wanted to see her. Rowena couldn't understand why though. She didn't have anything that he could want... unless; he wanted to combine their powers to take on Albus and the Order.

'Something's different with you,' Albus commented, still looking at Rowena.

Rowena shrugged and she looked back at Albus, into his blue eyes. She immediately felt a pressure on her mind but she blocked it. Albus

then nodded to himself. 'You've learnt Occlumency, that's what's different.'

It was true; she was now able to do Occlumency without many problems. She was grateful that Sevnik taught it to her. She knew it would come in handy.

'I don't like my mind being explored without my knowledge,' Rowena informed him.

'I see,' Albus said softly.

At first, Rowena thought he would be angry but he appeared more worried than anything. 'Have something to hide?' Albus asked.

'No,' Rowena said quietly.

'Anything you want to tell me?' he asked next.

'No,' Rowena repeated.

She wondered if Albus knew she was lying but if he did he didn't say anything. 'I have also heard that my brother informed you of Ariana and my parents,' Albus said slowly.

'Yes, he did,' Rowena said lightly. 'Why didn't you tell me? Don't you trust me?'

'I haven't really told anyone,' Albus said. 'It isn't really anyone else's business. I do trust you but what happened to Ariana was tragic and I wished it had never happened but it cannot be undone, so I suggest we move on.'

'Do you miss her?' Rowena asked.

Albus ignored her question as he got up from his desk and walked over to the fireplace. He grabbed the Floo powder and he put Rowena's trunk and things in first with his wand.

‘Back on topic, tonight we’ll go home and then tomorrow I shall introduce you to the Order.’

Rowena nodded. She hadn't yet met the Order. Part of her was scared. What if they were scared of her or what if they immediately didn't like her? Rowena mentally kicked herself, since when did she care what people thought of her. She just had to be her normal self. Rowena stood up and walked over beside Albus. She wondered why he refused to talk about Ariana. There had to be another reason why.

She stepped through the fireplace and she arrived back in the kitchen at Godric's Hollow. She immediately picked up her things with her wand and took them up to her room. When Albus came through after her, she was already going up the stairs. She entered her room and put her things away using her wand. She loved how much faster and easier it made everything.

When she finished she went back downstairs and she started to make dinner. Albus remained at the kitchen table, knitting something from a Muggle pattern and he was doing it by hand, without his wand. Rowena looked over a few times. She couldn't understand his fascination with Muggles, and she didn't think she ever would.

The next morning, Rowena got up early, as did Albus and they ate a quiet breakfast in the kitchen together. After breakfast Rowena got ready and she met Albus at the front door. He regarded her for a moment before speaking.

‘Are you ready?’

Rowena didn't say anything, she just nodded. She was about to meet the Order of the Phoenix. Albus had mentioned them before but he never went into any detail. They walked down to the end of the street in silence until the end.

‘I think you should take my arm,’ he said gently.

Rowena didn't move. She just looked at him. Albus knew what she was thinking. ‘You don't know the location and this might be safer.’



This time, Rowena nodded and she gently grabbed Albus' arm and with a slight wave of his wand, they disappeared into thin air and reappeared at a different location. Rowena looked around. She didn't know where they were. She let go of Albus quickly.

'Are we near London?' Rowena asked.

Albus nodded. 'Yes, indeed. We are going to Grimmauld Place.'

As Albus said it, Rowena saw the sign. She looked and saw a row of tall houses which all looked the same. She followed Albus down the street and they eventually stopped outside houses eleven and thirteen.

'What are we waiting for?' Rowena asked.

Silently, Albus handed her a small, ripped sheet of parchment, The Order of the Phoenix can be found at number 12 Grimmauld Place, London.

Rowena only had time to re-read once it before it burst into flames and Rowena gasped and she dropped it. 'I don't understand,' she said frowning.

'When we're inside,' Albus said quietly.

If they were waiting then Rowena wasn't sure for what. Nothing had happened. They were still standing outside of the two houses. Suddenly houses eleven and thirteen began to part and another house rose up from the bottom. It looked like all the other house but smaller and last to pop up was the letter-box containing the number twelve. Rowena was surprised. She didn't think there was a number twelve, at first she thought Albus got the number wrong.

Rowena watched as Albus walked up the small steps to the front door and he tapped the door once with his wand. It clicked many times as though it were unlocking itself. The door opened and Rowena joined him and she followed him inside. It was dark and quite dusty. Rowena squinted for a moment until her eyes adjusted to the light and she looked around.

The front door immediately led onto a long hallway which was dark until the end. There were doors along each side of the hallway and most of them were closed. Albus closed the door and popped his wand back inside his robes and Rowena faced him.

‘This is headquarters for the Order of the Phoenix. I am the secret keeper for this place, which means now that you know about it, you can't tell anyone freely. Meetings are always held here and you'll meet everyone now. Some people are quite shocked to learn that you exist.’

Rowena wasn't sure how to take that. Why were people so shocked about her father having children? Though she did have to admit that she didn't really know anything about her father, except that he was a dark wizard. She followed Albus in down to the end of the hallway and down a flight of stairs which led into the kitchen. Albus opened the door and walked in with a smile on his face but Rowena was panicking inside. She felt scared.

The kitchen was full of people. They were all sitting around a long, rectangular table and all heads turned to look at Rowena. She froze before moving her feet and she stood beside Albus. He looked everyone over before speaking.

‘I would like everyone to meet Rowena Riddle,’ he said clearly.

All eyes in the room landed on Rowena. She shifted uncomfortably from all the sudden attention. She wasn't used to this. ‘And Rowena, this is the Order of the Phoenix. Let me introduce everyone to you. Meet the Weasley family, all the redheads, Arthur, Molly, Bill and next to him his is wife Fleur, Charlie, Percy, Fred, George, Ron and Ginny, though Charlie is working in Romania and Ginny is upstairs because she is under-age.’

Rowena looked them all over. They were all looking at her curiously. Albus continued around the table. ‘Here we have Remus Lupin and his wife Nymphadora Tonks, and they have a son Teddy who is also upstairs.’

Rowena looked at them. Remus and Nymphadora were holding hands under the table. Nymphadora gave her a big smile but Remus looked at her inquisitively. 'You're a werewolf,' Rowena said looking at Remus. It wasn't a question.

Remus nodded at her twice while keeping his eyes on her. Rowena looked away after another minute. She had never met one before. She could hardly believe that he was married and had a son; Rowena only hoped he wasn't a werewolf too. Honestly, Rowena didn't have a very high opinion of werewolves, except for the ones who were born that way, they couldn't help it.

'And that man there is Sirius Black, you might have read about him in the newspaper and he's Harry's god-father.'

She turned her head to look at him next. She had seen the paper, though she didn't read it, she didn't really care, all she knew was that he escaped from Azkaban after twelve years and he's the first person to do it. She looked him over. He looked different now than he did in the newspaper. His hair was no longer matted, it was still black but now it was a little longer and thick and shiny. His skin was still pale but he looked healthier still.

Albus continued around the table. 'That tall man there is Kingsley Shacklebolt.'

Rowena's eyes moved to him. He was one of two people that were standing in the room, other than Albus and herself. He was a tall, black wizard, with a gold hoop in one ear. He nodded his head once to her in greeting and Rowena returned it. He seemed quite nice.

'And that man there is Alastor Moody,' Albus continued.

Her eyes then shifted to him. She looked him over. He looked to be in his seventies and he appeared to have been through a lot. His face looked like someone had carved it from wood and had done a pretty bad job. His hair was shoulder-length and dark blonde. His nose had a large chunk missing and one of his eyes had been replaced with a magical one which was electric blue. Rowena thought it so cool.

‘And there we have Severus Snape, who is a spy for the Order; he used to be a Death Eater. He is currently the Potions master at Hogwarts.’

Rowena looked him over. He had shoulder length hair too though his was black, and quite greasy looking. It was curtained around his face. His pallid face turned slowly and looked at her, his black eyes boring into hers. She could feel another pressure on her mind. Severus could do Legilimency also, but it didn't surprise Rowena. How else could he be a spy in her father's presence?

‘This is Harry Potter, and I'm sure you've heard of him,’ Albus said happily.

‘Yes, of course,’ Rowena said inaudibly.

She was looking him and he was looking right back. His green eyes searched her light brown ones. Rowena wasn't sure how to feel about him. For years, he has been the target of her father and he was sitting right near her. She took his eyes off him quickly. She would make her mind about him later, there was plenty of time.

‘And here we have Hermione Granger, one of Harry's friends.’

Rowena looked at Hermione. She was quite a pretty girl, bushy brown hair and fair skin. She had a nervous smile right now though. Rowena idly wondered if something was bothering her.

‘There are other members of the Order, but they aren't here right now. You can meet them later. There's plenty of time.’

A small, faint smile appeared on Rowena's lips. She had just been thinking something along those lines. She wondered if Albus could read her mind without actually entering it.

‘I have some more news for you,’ Albus said clearly.

Rowena pulled herself from her thoughts and put all of her attention on Albus who was looking at her markedly, as though he noticed something odd in Rowena's behaviour.

'I have talked to the Order and Sirius about this and he has finally agreed that you can stay here,' Albus announced.

'What are you talking about?' asked Rowena, scowling faintly.

'Well,' Albus began slowly. 'It will be safer for you to stay here.'

'I'm now of age, I can look after myself,' Rowena stated, her tone unmistakably displeased.

'I know you can,' Albus said smiling at her. 'But your father is after you and I cannot allow him to get his hands on you. You will stay here; the discussion about this is over. It won't be for long,' he added.

Inside, Rowena was seething with anger but she didn't let it show. She gradually nodded her head and Albus smiled at her. 'Good, all settled then, I shall go and get your things.'

Albus returned promptly with her stuff and he led her to her new bedroom. She put her things away and Albus watched her.

'I have to leave now. I have a few things to take care of. Promise me you will behave and that you'll be polite.'

At first, Rowena said nothing but she knew that Albus wasn't going to leave with her promising. She sighed audibly and looked into Albus' eyes.

'I promise that I will behave and be polite,' she said.

'Good. I will see you in a few days to see how things are going,' Albus said turning to the door.

Rowena walked with Albus to the front door and he turned to face her again. Rowena hated these moments. Albus moved closer and hugged her very briefly before saying good-bye and Rowena said it back. Unbeknownst to her however, Harry was watching.

## Chapter Seven: Flashback

A nine year old Rowena sighed lightly as she sat down on the seat of the swing. The one beside her was empty and with her feet she slowly moved back and forth. She glanced around the perimeter of the small park and quickly her eyes settled upon a group of children, roughly her own age, playing and laughing together. She immediately felt envious of them.

The group of five children, three boys and two girls, drifted through the park, ever so slowly moving towards Rowena's location. When they were metres from her she could hear whispers but nothing clear or coherent. Rowena looked down at her feet as she continued to swing lightly.

Part of her wanted to go over there and talk to them, just be with other children but she already knew it was a bad idea. She bit her bottom lip as her eyes fixed on her old shoes. When shadows surrounded her, Rowena looked up sharply. The five children were almost upon her.

She shot to her feet and backed away from them. A small gasp left her lips when they quickly surrounded her. Rowena's eyes went to the swing, knowing she should have stayed close to it.

'I know you,' spoke the oldest boy there.

Rowena had seen him before. She knew him to be Gadon Walker. He was nothing more than a common bully. He used his large frame to bully the younger children, getting them to do anything for him and give him anything he wanted. Rowena had only run into him twice before. The second time she had been with Albus and as such, nothing bad had taken place.

His fists clenched tightly as he continued. 'You're that freak that lives with that old man,' he said nastily.

'I'm not a freak,' Rowena whispered feebly.

A couple of the children giggled. 'What happened to your parents? Did they run away and leave you? Dump you for being a freak?'

'I don't have parents,' Rowena whispered, her voice breaking. She felt the sting of her tears at the back of her eyes.

'Yeah, that's right, because you're a freak!' he yelled.

'You're the freak!' Rowena screamed, pushing Gadon backwards.

Gadon cried out as he fell hard on his bottom. He groaned as he quickly got back to his feet. Rowena's eyes widened and she stumbled slightly before turning and running away from the group. She instantly knew they were chasing her.

Half way across the park Rowena stumbled as the group caught her. The other two boys pushed her to the ground, turned her on her back and held her down. The two girls watched in shock, not knowing what to do. Gadon caught up and approached Rowena. He sneered at her before kicking her in the side.

Rowena gasped in pain and mentally kicked herself as a tear slid down from her eye. The last thing she wanted was to show any emotion to these bullies. She was better than that.

'Gonna be a cry-baby now?' Gadon taunted.

He kicked her again, eliciting the same reaction as before. On the fifth kick, the two boys holding her let go and Rowena groaned as he turned onto her side. It was obvious that Gadon wasn't finished with her yet though.

'So who's the old man you live with, your grandfather?' he asked almost curiously.

Rowena shrugged half-heartedly as she attempted to stand but Gadon quickly shoved her back to the ground with a push of his foot. 'Answer me, freak!'

Rowena felt another tear roll down her cheek and she quickly wiped it away. She shrugged again, not bothering to attempt anything else. She had never thought of Albus in those terms before. She had always just seen him as the man raising her. She did love him, sure but she knew they would never be that close.

‘No, he’s not my grandfather,’ she said weakly.

‘Apparently, no one likes freaks,’ said Gadon with a nasty smile.

‘I’m not a freak!’ Rowena repeated.

Gadon bent down and slapped her across the face brutally. ‘I saw what you were doing a few weeks ago,’ said Gadon loudly. ‘You were moving several things at once without touching them. That is not normal and everyone knows it.’

‘Um... Gadon...’ one of the girls whispered fearfully.

Gadon looked at her and followed her arm to see what she was pointing at. Across the park, walking towards them was Albus. Gadon’s eyes widened. ‘Come on, let’s go!’ he shouted to the group.

They all obeyed his order and they fled in the same direction. When another shadow passed over Rowena’s body, she groaned, thinking they had been mistaken and returned to torment her. She quickly realised that the shadow seemed a little too large to belong to a child and slowly, she turned her head.

She almost sobbed with relief when she saw Albus’ tall frame standing over her, his face soft with a pleasant expression. He smiled at Rowena as he carefully helped his ward back to her feet. Rowena gripped Albus’ arm and did not let go even when she stood standing. More tears ran down her face.

Albus’ smile faded faintly as he looked the young girl over. Since bringing her here as a baby, this was the first time she had shown him anything close to emotion. It seemed they had finally reached breaking point and could no longer be contained.



Hesitantly, Rowena moved closer to Albus and wrapped her arms around him. Albus' smile returned when he realised she was hugging him. Albus knelt down and hugged her back. She laid her head upon his shoulder and sighed shakily as her tears continued to fall.

'Are you alright?' he asked gently, stroking her long and soft brown hair.

Rowena nodded as best she could against his shoulder. 'Yeah... it just hurts.'

'Come on home, then. I shall get you a nice healing potion and then maybe some butterbeer. Would you like that?' said Albus, finally releasing his grip on her.

Their eyes locked, Albus searching through her light brown eyes, and learning all he needed to know without Rowena being any the wiser. Rowena nodded at his words as she pressed her lips together tightly. Albus straightened and grasped Rowena's small hand within his own and took her back home.

## Chapter Eight - Taken

A few weeks had past and Rowena was still at Grimmauld Place. She hadn't yet seen Albus again; she kept expecting him to walk through the door. It was boring here. Order members came and went as they pleased, though the trio hanged around here a bit, which annoyed Rowena to no end. Whenever she entered a room they were in they would just stare at her and their talking ceased instantly.

Many times Rowena thought about just leaving, especially late at night. Would they even notice if she left in the middle of the night? She could leave and be back within an hour. Right now, however, she was sitting in the backyard on a pile of bricks. She couldn't imagine why they were there, but there were many of them. She cleaned them off with her wand before sitting down on them. She didn't want to get the back of her robes dirty.

It was almost sunset and it just meant another day was about to end. Rowena stared at the orange horizon and she waited. She was going to leave later, she needed to get out of this house and she didn't want someone accompanying her. She was a big girl; she could take care of herself. When the sun was half-way down Rowena sighed heavily.

She didn't stir when the back door opened and closed again. She could hear footsteps moving towards her but Rowena still didn't move. She sat where she was, enjoying the sunset. The footsteps stop right near but she still didn't turn. The person moved again and sat beside Rowena, leaving a big space between them. Finally, Rowena turned her head and she saw Hermione Granger sitting there, smiling at her weakly.

Rowena didn't return it. She just looked Hermione over quickly before looking back at the horizon. Hermione nodded to herself and she looked also before looking back. 'Molly wants to know if you're eating with us,' she said quietly.

'No,' Rowena replied simply.

Hermione nodded again. 'She thought you say that.'

Silence lay between them. Rowena thought Hermione would get up and leave but she didn't. She remained sitting where she was, watching the sun go down with Rowena. 'Do you mind if I sit here with you?' she asked.

Rowena shook her head but said nothing. She didn't really mind as long as they didn't have to talk too much. Rowena didn't have any problems with Hermione. She was a nice, smart girl. Rowena knew she was a Muggle-born. It didn't bother Rowena because she wasn't much purer.

'Kingsley mentioned you went to Durmstrang,' Hermione remarked.

'Yes,' said Rowena, nodding.

'What's it like there? The school's in Bulgaria, right?'

Rowena turned her head again and looked at Hermione's face. She looked genuinely interested. She looked back at the sun, which was almost gone. 'Yes, it's in Bulgaria. It's a small school. There aren't many students.'

'Did you ever meet Viktor Krum? He came to Hogwarts for the Triwizard Tournament,' Hermione said making more conversation.

'No, I never actually met him but I saw him around and I heard about the Tournament.'

It went quiet again. A few minutes later, the sun disappeared under the earth and Rowena looked up. The moon was already out and the stars were beginning to show and twinkle in the velvety indigo sky.

'I'm gonna go eat,' Hermione sat quietly.

She stood up and wiped her pants briefly before walking away and going back inside. Rowena stayed where she was, she wasn't interested in eating right now. If she was hungry later she could get something then. She waited outside for another few hours before going back into the house. She went straight up to her room, ignoring all the stares on the way.

She lay down on her bed and stared at the ceiling. She would wait for another few hours before attempting to leave. She needed to make sure everyone was asleep in their rooms before even leaving her own room. When midnight came and went Rowena got up from her bed and changed into a set of heavy, black robes and she kept her wand in hand and she set off downstairs noiselessly.

It was deathly silent and Rowena couldn't see anyone around. She tapped the front door with her wand and it clicked open several times and she left the house. She walked down the few front steps and set off up the street. The temperature had gone down since she was last outside but at least it wasn't anywhere near snowing. She reached the top of the street and she continued walking onto the next one.

Suddenly, Rowena stopped and turned around. There was nothing and no-one behind her. She thought she had heard something. She frowned slightly. She decided it was nothing and kept on walking, her frown slowly fading. She did up her outer robe and placed her hands in her pockets, her wand was still in her right hand. She had no intention of letting it go.

She stopped again as she thought she heard something behind her. She turned but again, there was no-one there. Rowena had never felt frightened before, this was new to her. After half-an-hour she receded and walked back to Grimmauld Place. She entered the house again and she looked around. It was still quiet, nothing appeared to have changed.

She walked to her bedroom and once inside she stopped instantly and froze on the spot. Sirius was in her room, waiting for her. 'Why are you in here?' Rowena asked slowly.

'I saw you leave. You know you're not supposed to go out.'

Rowena said nothing. She knew what was going to happen. Sirius shrugged. 'I'm not going to tell Dumbledore but I don't think you should go out again, or at least tell someone, namely me.'

'I suppose I could do that,' Rowena said softly. 'Was it you following me tonight?'

Sirius nodded. 'Yeah, I'm an Animagus, a black dog,' he informed her.

Rowena nodded but said nothing. Sirius said a quiet, quick good-night before leaving the room, Rowena still said nothing. She changed for bed and lay down. She was tired and fell asleep quickly.

The next morning when Rowena walked down into the kitchen she saw Albus there; he was talking to Alastor and Kingsley. Sirius was watching her with a slight smile on his face. Rowena couldn't help but notice it. Did he tell Albus about her going out last night?

Albus looked over when the door opened and Rowena walked through. He approached her. He took her arm gently and led her back upstairs and down the hall into the living-room. There was no-one else in the room. His blue eyes looked Rowena over. He appeared concerned.

'I know you're bored here, but do not leave the house again,' Albus warned.

'Did Sirius tell you?' Rowena asked angrily.

'No, he did not,' Albus replied. 'I know many things, including what you're like. Do you not leave the house again,' he repeated.

'I'm not a child,' Rowena said coldly.

'I know but this is for your safety,' Albus said sternly.

He walked away from Rowena, and left the room. Rowena felt glued to the spot. Anger was rushing through her veins and she needed to calm herself down before going anywhere or talking to anyone. She was starting to learn what she was really like. She returned to her room. She wasn't interested in being around the Order right now. She needed to be alone.

The next day turned out to be the same as the others. There weren't many people at headquarters, just Sirius, Harry, Hermione, Ron and Ginny. They were all in the living-room and Rowena stood outside watching and listening to them.

'Don't you find her a little strange?' Harry asked the others.

'What do you mean?' Hermione said looking up at Harry.

'Well, she reminds me a lot of Voldemort and that can't be a good thing. Do you think she has a mother?'

'How else was she born then?' Ron asked snickering.

'Do you mean you think she's a test-tube baby?' Hermione asked, ignoring Ron's question.

Rowena silently moved closer and peered through the crack in the door. She saw Harry shrugged. 'I don't know. I just can't picture Voldemort having sex with someone and letting them go. If she has a mother then how did her mother escape and survive.'

'Maybe Dumbledore knows,' Sirius said piping up.

Sirius was watching them. He found their conversation to be intriguing. They all nodded at his statement but no-one knew what to say. Rowena returned to her room but she wasn't alone for long. Sirius knocked on the door and entered without waiting.

'Dumbledore's downstairs, he wants to talk to you.'

Rowena could only guess that something has happened or that he knows something, otherwise she knew he wouldn't be here. She followed Sirius down to the living-room and once in the room Sirius left. Albus turned at the noise. He approached Rowena. He looked worried.

'I have some bad news,' he said softly.

'What?' Rowena asked.

'Your mother has been found murdered,' Albus said gently.

Rowena didn't know what to say. He was telling her something she already knew. She faked a small sob and sad face before she looked up at Dumbledore. 'I wanted to meet her. What happened?'

Albus didn't appear to want to tell her but it was pointless keeping it from her. 'Her throat was slashed and she must have slipped and hit her head. There was nothing found at the scene. The Muggle police were all over it. She was found only a few days ago. They speculate she had been there for a while. People realised the pub was closed but no-one bothered to actually look inside or check. I'm sorry,' he added.

Rowena let one tear roll down her face, though deep inside she couldn't believe it took them that long to find her mother. She wiped her cheek and Albus moved closer and hugged her. Rowena buried her head in his shoulder. She could only think of a few things right now.

'Did she have family?'

Albus nodded gravely. 'Yes, she had a fiancé and she was four months pregnant. The baby died too, of course. They are all quite distraught.'

'Have you spoken to him?' Rowena asked in surprise.

'Yes,' Albus said nodding. 'He seems like a nice man.'

'Since I can no longer meet her, will you tell me about her?' Rowena asked watching Albus closely.

He shook his head after a moment's thought. 'No, not just yet, I think you should let this sink in first.'

Rowena burned with a sudden flood of hatred but it disappeared quickly. She just nodded. Albus then said a quick good-bye and he left; Rowena knew he was going back to Hogwarts.

It was now the middle of July and Rowena was beginning to feel the same as when she first arrived here. She needed to get out. It felt as though the house was beginning to smell bad and it seemed to get darker every day. It didn't bother Rowena but it was hard to be here all the time, and not being allowed out.

She had already planned to leave the house again later tonight. She had already informed Sirius of her intentions and he said he would follow her from a distance as a dog. Rowena didn't mind, as long as he did keep his distance. She didn't want him right behind her, watching her every small step.

At almost one in the morning, she went downstairs. Sirius was already waiting for her, in human form. 'Are you sure you want to go out?' he asked.

Rowena nodded. 'Yes,' she replied.

'Well, just so you know, if anything happens to you, I'll be the one Albus kills,' Sirius said, a slight smile forming on his face.

Rowena ignored it and opened the front door using her wand. She walked out and Sirius transformed behind her and began to follow after she left. She walked down the same streets that she did last time, though something felt different. It was colder than last time and she just felt odd. After forty-five minutes, she looked behind her, she couldn't see Sirius anywhere.

Her eyes widened in shock as a bright flash of white flew across the street. She heard someone whimper, it must have been Sirius. Rowena started to walk towards the noise but she stopped a four cloaked figures stood twenty feet from her. She then heard Sirius.

'Run! Run away now! They're here for you,' he cried out.

She heard him cry out again and then it became deathly silent. For some reason, she feared for Sirius' safety. She turned around the run the other way but another four cloaked people stood before her. She turned her head both ways several times. She was trapped. There



was nowhere for her to run now. They had her covered and surrounded. She took her hand out of her pocket and lifted her wand but she was disarmed quickly and one of the people in front of her grabbed her wand.

‘We hope you plan to come with us quietly,’ said one of them.

‘Who are you?’ Rowena asked shakily.

Some of them laughed. ‘We are your father’s followers,’ the same man replied back. His voice was thick and deep. Rowena didn’t recognise it but then again, she didn’t expect to.

‘I don’t know what you’re talking about,’ Rowena said, her voice now stronger.

They laughed again. ‘You can’t fool us,’ said someone else. ‘We’ve been following you, waiting for you to leave the house again. The first time you were out here, we watched you.’

Rowena knew she couldn’t win but she wasn’t going to go without a fight. Without warning she took off and ran in a different direction, away from all eight Death Eaters. They all hurried to follow her.

‘Do not kill her, stun only, the Dark Lord wants her alive and unharmed,’ one of them shouted.

She could hear the scrambling and stomping footsteps behind her but it didn’t last long, her ears quickly filled with the sound of her own beating heart. After several minutes she came running into a small village and there were many shouts behind her, all stunning spells missed her. She ran and weaved herself around many of the houses and buildings and she eventually stopped and leaned on her knees for support while taking in some deep breaths.

When she moved off the wall she was immediately grabbed around the waist. ‘You’re coming with me, pretty,’ a raspy voice said in her ear.

Fear flooded her body and she instinctively used her arm and swung it under, elbowing the person in the stomach. The man grunted in pain and the arm around her middle slackened and she ran for it again. She began to pant hard. She felt like she was running for her life, even though she knew they weren't going to kill her. She still didn't want to go with them.

But when she turned another corner, it turned out to be a big mistake. There were three Death Eaters blocking the small path to the other side and she turned to go back but the other five were behind her quickly. She stopped again and placed her arms by her side. She knew it was over. She then slowly held her hands up, she knew they had her. One of them stepped forwards and looked down on her.

'That's more trouble than we needed from you and elbowing Fenrir wasn't very nice of you but I'm sure your father will be forgiving, this time.'

Rowena narrowed her eyes at him. The man who just spoke was tall and his voice was slick and low. He continued looking at her but he didn't speak to her again. 'Macnair, grab her and let's go.'

The man named Macnair came forwards and grabbed Rowena by the back of her cloak. She didn't look at him or at any of the others. She kept her eyes in front of her. Her mind was racing. She needed to get out of this but she didn't know how. She was going to see her father. It scared her more than she would ever admit. She just hoped he wasn't going to kill her.

When Sirius came to, he shot to his feet. He was back in human form and he squinted. It was sunrise. The memories of last night came back to him and he spent a quick fifteen minutes shouting and call out Rowena's name with no success. He then quickly ran back to Grimmauld Place and he frantically searched for another Order member and he found Remus, who was trying to calm him down.

'He has her, he has-'

'Sirius, calm down,' Remus said gently.

‘NO,’ he shouted. ‘You need to get Dumbledore here now and call an emergency Order meeting.’

‘But-’ Remus started.

‘No,’ Sirius repeated. ‘We don’t have time for this. Do it now!’

Sirius went upstairs and woke up Harry and the others while Remus sent his Patronus to other Order members. They were all at the house within ten minutes, as was Dumbledore. ‘What’s the emergency?’ he asked casually.

‘Rowena’s gone,’ Sirius said without delay.

‘What do you mean “gone”?’ Dumbledore asked his voice now tight.

Sirius ran his hands through his hair and he appeared stricken with shock and almost despair. ‘I mean what I said, she’s gone. She wanted to go for a walk last night and-’

‘What?’ Dumbledore asked. Dumbledore now appeared angry and his voice conveyed that.

‘And I said I would follow her in dog form and she agreed,’ Sirius continued through Dumbledore’s interruption. ‘Something happened and I was hit by a spell that I didn’t recognise and suddenly Rowena was surrounded by a group of Death Eaters. She must have run for it but I don’t know what happened afterwards. I collapsed and only just came to half-an-hour ago.’

Dumbledore now looked livid. ‘How could you do something so foolish?’

He walked away from the Order and turned his back on them. He was angry with himself more than Sirius. He was the one who should have been watching her. He shouldn’t have expected anyone else to. His hand ran over his long beard while he thought. He knew what she was like and he knew there was a good possibility that she would go out anyway.

'I wasn't thinking,' Sirius said quickly. 'I thought it would be alright because she wasn't alone, I thought we'd be alright.'

'Well, you thought wrong,' Molly Weasley said.

'What happens now?' Arthur Weasley asked. He had placed a hand on his wife's arm, as though trying to settle her. He appeared slightly angry too.

All Dumbledore could do right now was shake his head. The others looked around at each other. They were all pretty much thinking the same thing but Remus voiced it.

'I don't think there is much we can do. We don't know where Voldemort is, so we have no idea where they had taken her.'

'We could search the area,' Hermione suggested. 'See if anything's there, any clues maybe.'

'That's a brilliant idea,' Remus said smiling at Hermione, who couldn't help but blush faintly and she looked down at her hands that were sitting in her lap.

'It is a good idea,' said Harry, agreeing.

The Order got things together quickly and within an hour, all members were searching the area and nearby villages, towns and suburbs. They made sure they were subtle about it and did not draw unwanted attention to themselves. When they all finished their searching they returned to Grimmauld Place and all piled back into the kitchen and sat around the table, except for Tonks though, who went upstairs to Teddy.

'What do we do now then?' Hermione asked with a small sigh.

'I don't know,' Dumbledore replied. 'There isn't much we can do. We have to wait and be patient.'

The room went quiet. Some people's heads were bowed and some just looked into space. Albus knew bad things were about to happen.

## Chapter Nine – Lord Voldemort

A loud crack broke the silence on a long, dark street, though no-one seemed to notice anything. Rowena knew they were near the place in which they were going to. She was still being held by Macnair. A few times she twisted to see if his grip had slackened but it hadn't, not even a millimetre. They came to a stop outside a large mansion and they all walked up to the door.

It opened of its own accord and they walked inside. They took Rowena to what appeared to be the living-room. Macnair let go of Rowena and he pushed her to her knees. 'Wait here,' he said gruffly.

Rowena did as she was told and she waited in the room alone. The Death Eaters had left and when they returned Rowena noticed they all took off their outer robes and masks. She could see all of their faces. She could only see two women in the room, the rest all appeared to be men. They all took turns of looking down at her. One of the women bent down and lifted Rowena's head by the chin.

Their eyes met. The woman was tall, thin and she had long black hair and thick, heavy-lidded eyes and she was extremely pallid. Her grey eyes looked into Rowena's and she smiled after a while.

'So, you're his daughter?' she said standing up.

She circled Rowena once before speaking again. 'I wondered what you would look like. This is not quite what I pictured. You're prettier than I thought you'd be.'

A man walked over and stood beside the woman. 'What do you think, Rod? Is she pretty?'

Rowena's eyes went to the man she addressed. He was a little taller than her, and his hair was dark and his skin was just a pale. He bent down and took a good look at her. 'Yeah, she's alright,' he commented.

He stood back up and walked away. The woman cackled with happiness. She took a strand of Rowena's hair and twisted it around

her index finger. Rowena couldn't help but wonder to herself if this woman was alright.

'Take your hand away from her,' said a cold voice.

All the Death Eaters in the room scrambled into position in a circle, the woman included. Rowena couldn't see the person speaking.

'You will show my daughter the same respect you give me.'

After a moment he came into view and Rowena looked up at him. She gasped audibly but Voldemort didn't look offended. He was tall, skeletally thin and his face and body was whiter than a skull, with wide, livid scarlet eyes, and his nose was flat as a snake's, with slits for nostrils. He reached down and placed on white hand under her chin gently.

'Stand up, my dear,' he said softly.

Rowena slowly stood up and she looked into her father's scarlet eyes. 'You look like I used to,' he commented.

Voldemort moved closer to her. Rowena didn't flinch. He then moved away and addressed his followers. 'I am proud that you found her and were able to bring her to me. Who has her wand?'

A tall man with long blonde hair and grey eyes stepped forwards, he held out his hand and handed it to Voldemort, who took it and examined it carefully. 'What is it?' he asked.

'It's yew and dragon heartstring,' Rowena said steadily.

'Interesting. Bellatrix,' Voldemort said quietly. 'Come here.'

The woman with black hair and heavy-lidded eyes looked at Voldemort, she seemed overjoyed with happiness. It flooded her face, her eyes lit up. She made her way to him effortlessly, as though she were floating on air. When reaching him she stopped.

'Give this back to my daughter.'

The happiness on Bellatrix's face disappeared. She took the wand in her hand and looked at Rowena. She slowly walked over and gave it back to her. Rowena looked it over before putting it in her pocket.

This surprised Voldemort. 'You're not going to fight me?'

'No,' she replied. 'I want to know why you wanted me here before I do anything.'

Voldemort laughed but it wasn't a taunting one. He was more surprised. 'I will admit that I am astounded. Though, I have good news, I'm not going to kill you. I just want to know about you and about your past. I want to know how alike we really are.'

The room went quiet and Voldemort looked around while Rowena kept her eyes on him. She wanted to know about him also. She was happy that she made the right choice in not using her wand. Besides, she wouldn't be able to take him and his followers on. She would most definitely lose. And there was no need to be hasty in this situation.

'I want my followers to stay here while my daughter and I go to my chambers. We are not to be disturbed for anything, unless an attack, which I highly doubt will happen.' He walked over to Rowena. 'Follow me, my dear.'

Rowena nodded and Voldemort left the room and she followed. They walked up two flights of stairs and walked to the end of the hallway. It was dark and the floor was covered in thick, dark green carpet and the walls were all painted white. Voldemort opened a grey coloured door and he held the door open for Rowena, she walked through and Voldemort then closed it behind her.

He took his wand out and locked the door, then he conjured up two black and comfortable looking armchairs. 'Please, sit down.'

Rowena nodded and she sat down. Voldemort then waved his wand again and conjured a table along with some Firewhiskey and two

glasses. He poured it using his wand and he then sat down himself. He studied Rowena's face briefly.

'I don't even know your name, my dear,' Voldemort said smiling.

'It's Rowena,' she said quietly.

'Rowena,' he said thoughtfully. 'Tell me your full name.'

Rowena nodded. 'Rowena Meropé Riddle,' she said quieter still.

'Who named you?' he asked stiffly.

The atmosphere in the room had shifted and Rowena could feel it. She wondered if he was angry about something. 'Albus Dumbledore named me. He raised me,' she replied.

Voldemort stood up and he strode to the other side of the room. Now Rowena knew he was angry. Voldemort began to pace the room and his eyes were narrowed. 'Tell me about your life,' he said firmly.

'Alright,' Rowena said slowly. 'Albus took me as a baby; I'm not sure how he found me or how he knew about me. He refused to tell me. I lived with him at his house in Godric's Hollow and when he was unable to his brother looked after me. When I was old enough I attended Durmstrang, I've only just graduated.'

'Why not go to Hogwarts?' asked Voldemort slowly.

'I wanted to at first but I know that Albus works there and I knew if I went to Hogwarts he would constantly watch me and I didn't want that.'

'Smart girl,' Voldemort commented. 'Meropé was my mother's name.'

'I know,' Rowena said quietly. 'Albus told me.'

'Really...'



It went quiet again. Voldemort continued his pacing. Rowena decided to stay quiet and she picked up her drink and took a generous sip of it. 'What do you know of your mother?' he asked when Rowena put her glass down.

'She's dead,' Rowena said uninterestedly.

Voldemort turned sharply to look at his daughter. 'Really? How do you know that?'

'Albus told me,' she replied. With her tone, she sounded almost bored.

'I see,' Voldemort said quietly.

He walked over to Rowena and stood in front of her. Rowena stood up quickly and Voldemort look upon her face. He seemed please about something. 'You remind me of myself when I was young.'

Voldemort moved closer and he bent his head slowly and kissed Rowena on the cheek. His eyes glowed and his smiled disappeared. 'I want to show you something,' he announced.

Using his wand, he summoned a pensieve and he placed a few memories within it. 'Go in,' he prompted. 'Have a look.'

Rowena wasn't sure whether she wanted to look inside. These memories belong her father and she had no idea what he was going to show her. She took a deep breath and she held in before diving into the silvery pool. She felt herself fall and she landed on her feet in Albus' office at Hogwarts. She looked around. Only Albus was in the room, besides herself. Her father had not joined her.

The office looked the same here as it does now. Albus looked a little younger but Rowena wouldn't guess that it has been more than fifty years. Albus was sitting at his desk and he appeared to be waiting for something. Rowena then turned as the office door opened slowly and a tall figure entered the room. Rowena knew immediately that it was her father. He was wearing a long, black cloak and his eyes were glowing a dull scarlet. His face was pale and his cheeks were hollow and his eyes gaunt. Rowena's eyes went back to Albus, he had

shown no surprise. It was evident that this visit had been made by appointment.

‘Good evening, Tom,’ said Albus easily. ‘Won’t you sit down?’

‘Thank you,’ Voldemort said, and he took a seat to which Albus had gestured – it was the very seat that Rowena had seen in his office when she was there in the present time. ‘I heard you had become Headmaster,’ he said, his voice was high and cold. ‘A worthy choice.’

‘I am glad you approve,’ said Albus, smiling. ‘May I offer you a drink?’

‘That would be welcome,’ said Voldemort. ‘I have come a long way.’

Albus stood from his seat and swept over to the cabinet which was full of bottles. Having handed Voldemort a goblet of wine and poured one for himself, he returned to the seat behind his desk.

‘So, Tom... to what do I owe the pleasure?’

Voldemort did not answer at once, but merely sipped his wine. ‘They do not call me “Tom” anymore,’ he said. ‘These days I am known as-’

‘I know what you are known as,’ said Albus, smiling pleasantly. ‘But to me, I’m afraid; you will always be Tom Riddle. It is one of the irritating things about old teachers, I am afraid, that they never quite forget their charges’ youthful beginnings.’

He raised his glass as though toasting Voldemort, whose face remained expressionless. Nevertheless, Rowena felt the atmosphere in the room change subtly: Albus’ refusal to use Voldemort’s chosen name was a refusal to allow Voldemort to dictate the terms of the meeting and seeing it, Rowena could tell that Voldemort took it as such.

‘I am surprised you have remained here so long,’ said Voldemort after a short pause. ‘I always wondered why a wizard such as yourself never wished to leave the school.’

‘Well,’ said Albus, still smiling, ‘to a wizard such as myself, there can be nothing more important than passing on ancient skills, helping hone young minds. If I remember correctly, you once saw the attraction of teaching too.’

‘I see it still,’ Voldemort said. ‘I merely wondered why you – who is often asked for advice by the Ministry, and who has twice, I think, been offered the post of Minister-’

‘Three times at last count, actually,’ said Albus. ‘But the Ministry never attracted me as a career. Again, something we have in common, I think.’

Voldemort inclined his head, unsmiling, and took another sip of wine. Albus did not break the silence that stretched between them now, but waited, with a look of pleasant expectancy, for Voldemort to talk first.

‘I have returned,’ he said after a little while, ‘later, perhaps, than Professor Dippet expected... but I have returned, nevertheless, to request again what he once told me I was too young to have. I have come to ask you that you permit me to return to this castle, to teach. I think you must know that I have seen and done much since I left this place. I could show and tell your student’s things they can gain from no other wizard.’

Albus considered Voldemort over the top of his own goblet for a while before speaking. ‘Yes, I certainly do know that you have seen and done much since leaving us,’ he said quietly. ‘Rumours of your doings have reached your old school, Tom. I should be sorry to believe half of them.’

Voldemort’s expression remained impassive as he said, ‘Greatness inspires envy, envy engenders spite, spite spawns lies. You must know this, Dumbledore.’

‘You call it “greatness”, what you’ve been doing, do you?’ asked Albus delicately.

‘Certainly,’ Voldemort said, his eyes seemed to burn red. ‘I have experimented; I have pushed the boundaries of magic further, perhaps, than they have ever been pushed-’

‘Of some kinds of magic,’ Albus corrected him quietly. ‘Of some. Of others, you remain... forgive me... woefully ignorant.’

For the first time, Voldemort smiled. It was a taut leer, an evil thing, more threatening than a look of rage. ‘The old argument,’ he said softly. ‘But nothing I have seen in the world has supported your famous pronouncements that love is more powerful than my kind of magic, Dumbledore.’

‘Perhaps you have been looking in the wrong places,’ Albus suggested.

‘Well, then, what better place to start my fresh researches than here, at Hogwarts?’ said Voldemort. ‘Will you let me return? Will you let me share my knowledge with your students? I place myself and my talents at your disposal. I am yours to command.’

Albus raised his eyebrows. ‘And what will become of those whom you command? What will happen to those who call themselves – or so rumour has it – Death Eaters?’

Rowena looked between the two men quickly. She could instantly tell that her father had not expected Albus to know this name; she saw Voldemort’s eyes flash red again and the slit like nostrils flare.

‘My friends,’ he said, after a moment’s pause, ‘will carry on without me, I am sure.’

‘I am glad to hear that you consider them friends,’ said Albus. ‘I was under the impression that they are more in the order of servants.’

‘You are mistaken,’ said Voldemort.

‘Then if I were to go to the Hog’s Head tonight, I would not find a group of them – Nott, Rosier, Mulciber, Dolohov – awaiting your return? Devoted friends indeed, to travel this far with you on a snowy

night, merely to wish you luck as you attempted to secure a teaching post.'

There could be no doubt in Albus' detailed knowledge of those with whom he was travelling was even less welcome to Voldemort; however, he rallied almost at once. 'You are omniscient as ever, Dumbledore.'

'Oh, no, merely friendly with the local barmen,' said Dumbledore lightly. 'Now Tom...'

Albus set down his empty glass and drew himself up in his seat, the tips of his fingers together in a very characteristic gesture. '...let us speak openly. Why have you come here tonight surrounded by henchmen, to request a job we both know you do not want?'

Rowena quickly looked at her father, whom looked coldly surprised. 'A job I do not want? On the contrary, Dumbledore, I want it very much.'

'Oh, you want to come back to Hogwarts, but you do not want to teach any more than you wanted to when you were eighteen. What is it you're after, Tom? Why not try an open request for once?'

Voldemort sneered. 'If you do not want to give me a job-'

'Of course I don't,' said Albus. 'And I don't think for a moment you expected me to. Nevertheless, you came here, you asked, you must have had a purpose.'

Voldemort stood up. His face seemed to change more, thick with rage. 'This is your final word?'

'It is,' Albus said, also standing.

'Then we have nothing more to say to each other.'

'No, nothing,' said Albus, agreeing and a great sadness filled his face. 'The time is long gone when I could frighten you with a burning

wardrobe and force you to make repayment for your crimes. But I wish I could, Tom... I wish I could...'

For a second, Rowena thought she saw Voldemort's hand twitch towards his pocket and his wand; but then the moment had passed, Voldemort turned away, the door was closing and he was gone.

Rowena felt as though she had to remind herself to breathe. She looked back at the younger Albus; he was still staring at the back of the closed door. Rowena then felt a hand go around her arm. 'Let's go.'

The present day Voldemort took her back up to the surface and back to reality. When back in her father's chambers, he released her and Rowena walked away slightly. She wasn't sure what to think after seeing that.

'Which post were you after?'

'Defence Against the Dark Arts,' said Voldemort. 'Though, I had planned on changing the subject somewhat.'

'How?' Rowena asked.

Voldemort stopped and faced Rowena, looking at her. A small smile painted his lips. 'I would have made it more about the Dark Arts, rather than the defence of it.'

'Like at Durmstrang?'

'Yes,' Voldemort said slowly. 'Like at Durmstrang.'

Rowena was beginning to wonder if there was anything that he didn't know about. Well, maybe he knew nothing about love, but Rowena didn't know whether to believe until she saw it herself. With how he spoke and his actions, Rowena was questioning how alike they really are. It surprised Rowena, and she could understand why.

‘Tell me how you killed your mother,’ asked Voldemort, moving to his black armchair. He picked up a glass of Firewhiskey and he took a small sip.

‘I don’t know what you're talking about,’ Rowena replied softly.

‘Now, now, don’t be like that,’ said Voldemort slyly. ‘I have already sent a few of my Death Eaters to the crime scene and with the way the place was cleaned, it had to be done by someone magical. No Muggle could have cleaned the area so well.’

‘Even if that’s true, why would you suspect me?’ Rowena asked.

‘Because you and I are so alike. I killed my grandparents and my father. Who else would’ve wanted to kill your mother? Dumbledore? I highly doubt that’s possible,’ said Voldemort mockingly.

Rowena didn’t know what to say now. He had her and he got her well. She still didn’t think it wise to trust him right now; it wasn’t the right time, if there ever was one. She would keep it to herself a little bit longer, so she retained her silence.

‘Very well,’ Voldemort said softly. ‘I suppose you might talk later.’

Rowena frowned, was that a threat? She relaxed her face again quickly as her father stood up and placed his glass back onto its silver tray. ‘I suppose you should meet my followers,’ he said.

He adjusted his robes and headed for the door, unlocking it with his wand. He walked out noiselessly and Rowena sighed faintly and she followed.

## Chapter Ten – The Death Eaters

Rowena followed her father back into the living-room of the mansion they were in. She had never seen a place so big before. She couldn't imagine that her father owned this, how would he have had the time? The Death Eaters were still in the room but some had sat down and some were talking in small groups. But when Voldemort entered the room, it went quiet and all Death Eaters moved quickly into a circle.

Rowena ignored most of the commotion and she looked around the living-room. It was large, with a silver, rectangular table which took up most of the space. The fireplace was surrounded by expensive marble and a fire roared hotly within it. The floor was covered in pure white carpet and the large window on one side was covered with a white curtain, though Rowena was sure there was a spell, so no-one could see in.

Voldemort entered the circle and walked around slowly. After a while, Rowena finished her exploring of this room and she faced them and watched.

'This is my daughter, Rowena,' he said slowly. 'And like I said before, you will treat her with the same respect that you give me. Remember, she is my daughter, if anyone disrespects her or hurts her they will suffer greatly.'

It went silent again. Rowena felt confident that nothing would happen, though she couldn't deny that Bellatrix worried her a little. The woman didn't look entirely stable and all there in the head. Rowena hoped it didn't cause her downfall.

'Now, Rowena, come here,' said Voldemort calmly.

Rowena passed in the circle and stood beside her father. 'I would like to introduce my followers to you. There are quite a few, so please, do be patient.'

Rowena remained quiet and she nodded. 'Very well, first of all, this is Lucius Malfoy,' Voldemort said slowly watching the man he was introducing.



Rowena looked Lucius over. He was tall, with long, white blonde hair and cold, grey eyes. He smiled softly at Rowena, showing her his white teeth. 'It's a pleasure,' he said delicately, done with much refinement. Rowena nodded her head to him once, but said nothing. Voldemort turned pointed to two other white blonde haired people. 'Narcissa and Draco, Lucius' wife and son, you might get along with Draco, to a degree, he is only slightly younger than you.'

They moved along to the next person. 'Meet Bellatrix Lestrange. She has already shown an interest you in,' Voldemort said. 'Which will end, now,' he finished coldly.

Bella's black eyes glowed but quickly settled and she bowed. 'And this is her husband, Rodolphus and his brother, Rabastan. I'm sure they'll treat you well.'

Rowena looked the Lestrange's over. Rodolphus and Rabastan both had black hair, though, Rodolphus' was just above his shoulders and Rabastan's was quite short and he appeared to be the younger of the two. At first, Rowena couldn't believe that Rabastan was a Death Eater. To her, he seemed nervous, as though he didn't want to be here. It made Rowena wonder if he was only here because his big brother was.

The next person Rowena meet was Peter Pettigrew, or Wormtail, as they called him. He only looked at Rowena for a split second for returning his eyes to the floor. He was a short man, with balding mousy brown hair and small, watery eyes. He appeared to be frightened, of what, Rowena wasn't sure.

She then met Antonin Dolohov, who was a tall, leering man, with short, brown hair and pale skin. His face was twisted and looked as though he hadn't shaved in a few days and his dark grey eyes searched Rowena's light brown ones. He smiled faintly at her, which Rowena didn't return. Rowena didn't think that he looked too friendly.

They moved along in the circle and she next met the Carrows, Amcys and Aleto. They were both on the short side and both had the same colour brown hair. Amcys was a squat, lumpy looking

wizard and Rowena noticed that his leer was lopsided. She couldn't help but frown a little. She then moved to Alecto. She was slightly shorter than her brother and she was a stout woman. She wasn't smiling at all when she looked at Rowena. Rowena thought Alecto looked worried, not frightened or scared, but worried that something might go wrong here, tonight.

The next person in the circle was Fenrir Greyback; he was the person that Rowena had elbowed when she was being chased. She looked him over quickly. He was a big, rangy man with long, greying hair and whiskers and she noticed his nails were long and yellow and so were his teeth, plus they looked pointed.

'You're a werewolf,' she said.

This wasn't a question; this was a statement also, like she did with Remus. She could tell that some people were werewolves just by looking at them, most of the time their appearance gave them away. Fenrir's appearance greatly gave it away.

Fenrir nodded and growled in response. He appeared to be proud of what he was, though it made Rowena wonder if Fenrir was really a Death Eater or if he was there just because he wanted to be.

Rowena moved on and she felt something different when she came to the next man. He was tall, with black hair, and delicate black moustache. His Death Eater robes appeared slightly more constrictive than anyone else's that she noticed. She looked him up and down and wondered if she wanted to learn anymore about this man. He was Walden Macnair and his dark blue eyes seemed to gently pierce Rowena. She felt her cheeks flush but she only hoped it wasn't noticed. Macnair smiled politely at her and gave her a small bow. She returned it with a slight head nod.

She moved along quickly and came to Mulciber. He was a medium height wizard, with short grey hair that parted onto the sides from the back. His skin was white but he didn't seem very pale at all. He had already discarded his Death Eater robes and he was wearing a smart looking suit. For a moment Rowena wondered if he was allowed to wear those.

The next man was Augustus Rookwood. He was tall, with long, wavy brown hair that had been pulled back into a pony-tail. He was pockmarked though he looked to be quite a competent wizard. Rowena could see a fiery passion within his dark brown eyes and it continued to burn as they looked at each other.

That night Rowena also met the other Death Eaters, Avery, Gibbon, Jugson, Theodore Nott Snr, Crabbe Snr, Goyle Snr, Evan Rosier, Selwyn, Yaxley, Travers, Thorfinn Rowle and Rowena was told of Severus Snape, whom she has already met. She told them he was in the Order, but apparently her father already knew that. He claimed that Severus was a spy for them. Rowena wasn't sure what to believe. He could be on either side or in this for himself.

When the introductions ended Voldemort returned to his chambers alone and he told Rowena that her chambers were at the other end of the hall on the same floor, and just to wave her wand if she needed anything or to curse someone that annoyed her in any way.

She entered her bedroom chambers slowly and she door in the doorframe and looked around. The room was large and very spacious. There was a large, queen-sized bed in the middle of the room and a tall, wide black wardrobe in one corner. The floor was covered in a thick, black carpet and the two windows were covered in white curtains, similar to the ones in the living-room.

Rowena looked to the walls, which were all painted white and there was a medium-sized chandelier with candles, instead of light bulbs. It looked old, and it looked as though it hasn't been used in a while. Rowena walked over to the bed and she sat down. She wasn't sure how to feel about things right now. She couldn't deny that she was feeling a little confused and overwhelmed.

Everything now seemed to be moving so fast and Rowena felt breathless just thinking about it. In a strong way, it made her nervous but she couldn't explain why. She lay down in the bed, still in her robes and she went to sleep after a long while.

In the morning, Rowena woke up and she made her bed. She then freshened up in the bathroom before going downstairs. It was still early. There was only a few other people awake and up and about. She looked at them but avoided the room in which they were in. Rowena made her way to the back door, which was through the dining-room and she looked around.

The backyard alone was massive. Rowena thought you could probably fit another mansion on this land easily. The green grass was bright and very lush. Rowena jumped a little as a flock of albino peacocks wattled passed her majestically. Rowena narrowed her eyes slightly, how many wizards would have peacocks? Rowena thought it a little unusual.

She stayed on the small porch area that was just before the grass and she went undercover and sat down where the small table was. It was dark green and Rowena checked one of the seats before sitting down, it was fine. The sun was just beginning to come up when the back door opened and a few people walked out. They approached Rowena and they all sat down hesitantly.

Rowena looked at them, Bella, Rookwood, Macnair, Rabastan, Evan, Gibbon and Fenrir. Rowena could only imagine what they wanted. Rowena looked at all of them over slowly. She couldn't see anyone's wand so she assumed they weren't going to kill or hurt her. Her eyes lingered on Gibbon, she knew who he reminded her of, but she wasn't sure if this was the right time to speak of it.

'Can I help you?' Rowena asked, looking around at all of them again.

'We just wanted to know more about you,' Macnair said quietly.

'Yes,' agreed Bella. 'We're all curious.'

'I see,' Rowena said slowly. She could help but feel a little suspicious about their sudden interest in her. 'What do you want to know?'

'What was your mother's name?' said Evan.

The question surprised Rowena. Why would they want to know anything about her mother? She shifted in her chair slightly before saying anything. 'Can I ask questions in return if I answer yours?'

'Certainly,' Gibbon said.

One of Rowena's eyebrows rose very slightly, Gibbon's tone was almost quite polite. 'Very well,' she said calmly.

She was more than happy to tell the Death Eaters about herself, though she probably wouldn't do this for anyone else. These people followed her father loyally and bravely, plus her father must trust them to some degree, otherwise, Rowena was sure they wouldn't be here.

'My mother was Isabelle Baylon,' she said, answering Evan's question.

'So... you know who she is?' asked Bella, frowning.

'Yes,' said Rowena, nodding slightly. 'Albus told me her name but I was unable to meet her.'

'Albus?' Gibbon questioned.

'Dumbledore's first name, idiot,' snapped Fenrir impatiently.

Gibbon then gave Fenrir a hard look but he kept quiet.

'I don't believe you,' said Bella quietly.

All eyes turned to Bella. Her eyes were looking directly into Rowena's. They were narrowed and dark looking, it was menacing. Rowena knew that Bella could be a dangerous person to have around.

'Why don't you believe what I say?'

'Your mother's dead,' Bella stated.

'I know.'

‘How?’

‘Albus told me.’

‘Why do you call him that?’

The eyes around the table went looked between Rowena and Bella rapidly many times during the quick interaction. Rowena decided to take a moment before answering Bella’s question. She leaned back in her chair and sighed lightly as she placed her right hand on top of her left, which was resting on her abdomen.

‘What else would I call him? I’ve called him by his first name all my life. Why would I stop now?’

‘Isn’t here your enemy?’ Bella asked quickly.

Rowena could tell that Bella wanted to win this conversation, she wanted the last word.

‘No, Albus is not my enemy. I do not always share his view on things but not everyone agrees on things.’

‘He’s the Dark Lord’s enemy,’ Bella said abruptly, almost interrupting Rowena.

‘I know, and perhaps with good reason, I know,’ Rowena said calmly.

Bella’s cheeks flush and unnatural and ugly red, it blotched across both cheeks unevenly and Bella finally looked away from Rowena, she seemed extremely unhappy that Rowena could answer her questions without any hesitation. Though, Bella stayed where she was, she didn’t leave.

‘Is there anything you want to know?’ asked Rowena after taking a deep breath.

‘What can you tell us about the Order of the Phoenix?’ asked Evan.

'I can't tell you where it's located, as I'm sure you know,' Rowena said. 'However...'

'Are you a member?' asked Macnair, interrupting Rowena.

'In a manner of speaking,' replied Rowena, over-looking the interruption. 'However,' she continued, 'I'm sure you know who the Order consists of.'

Most of them nodded. 'Did you meet Lupin?' Fenrir asked.

'Yes, I did,' Rowena said slowly. 'Why do you ask?'

'I was the one who bit him as a child. He was roughly five or six at the time. He tasted quite delicious, as I recall,' he said fondly, his voice raspy. 'I've heard his son turned out human though,' Greyback said after a moment of silence.

'He would still be half-werewolf,' Rowena said promptly.

'Yes,' Fenrir said, agreeing. 'But he won't transform. I'm hoping to change that.'

Rowena wasn't quite sure what to say about that. She felt disgusted at hearing that and she hid it from appearing on her face. She was sure that no-one noticed though, as no-one said anything or looked at her oddly.

'So, are you a full Death Eater?' Rowena asked Fenrir.

He turned his head at the question sharply. 'What's that supposed to mean?' he asked, his eyes wide.

'She's asking if you have the Dark Mark,' Macnair said lightly, a small smile appearing on his lips. Rowena kept her eyes on Fenrir. He seemed to struggle with answering the question.

'No, I don't,' he finally said, mumbling.

Her eyes remained on Fenrir, who was now looking at Macnair, ominously. She thought Fenrir seemed embarrassed about it. Though, Rowena was already sure that Fenrir didn't share her father's views on the wizarding world. He enjoyed biting, infecting and in some instances, killing people. He was in this for the victims, not the ideology.

Rowena knew that she could probably tear everyone apart and analyse everyone, but it would take too long. She moved on to someone else. Her eyes found Macnair, who was looking back at her. Rowena couldn't help but feel strange when he looked at her. What was it about him?

She then ignored it and looked at Gibbon. 'Do you have a sister?'

His body seemed to twitch at the word sister. He looked at her. 'Yes. How did you know that?'

'And her name is Aurora?' Rowena questioned.

Gibbon looked shocked. 'Yes. How do you know this?' he repeated, his voice becoming a little louder.

'She's the librarian at Durmstrang,' Rowena told him. 'I think she's married, though she still uses her maiden name,' Rowena added.

It went very quiet. Gibbon was no longer looking at Rowena. He didn't seem to be really looking at anything. He then slowly turned to Rowena again. 'My sister hated it when I told her I became a Death Eater. She told our parents and I ended it. I haven't seen her since.'

'You ended it? What do you mean?' asked Rowena.

'Simple, I murdered my parents. The day Aurora told them about me, I went back home and faced them. Aurora was still there. Both my parents said over and over how disappointed they were and all that crap. They were going to turn me in. I couldn't have that, so I killed them. Aurora screamed and she ran from the house. I haven't seen her since.'



'Why do you think your sister didn't turn you in?' Rowena asked. She was genuinely interested in knowing this information.

'I think she was scared that I or other Death Eaters would come after her,' Gibbon said with a wry smile.

There was a small pause.

'What about you, Macnair? What do you do with yourself, besides killing and scaring people?' Rowena said dryly.

He smiled at her, his white teeth shining. 'Please, call me Walden,' he said naturally. It made Rowena wonder how old Walden was.

Rowena waited for him to speak more. He smiled wider and spoke. 'I'm an executioner for the Ministry in my spare time,' he said smiling.

'For dangerous animals?' Rowena questioned.

'Yes,' he said looking into her eyes.

'How old are you?' Rowena asked.

'Thirty-Three,' he replied.

Rowena was surprised again. He was younger than she thought he would be. She looked away from him as she remembered the memory she saw. She turned to Evan. 'Rosier,' she whispered, trying to remember.

Evan looked to her, frowning. 'Your father was a Death Eater,' Rowena said slowly when she remembered.

Evan nodded. 'Yes, how-'

'I saw a memory of my father going to Hogwarts, your father a few other Death Eaters travelled with him,' she said, answering his question before he could ask it. 'I thought the name sounded familiar.'

It went quiet again. 'Who's the eldest Death Eater out of all of you?' Rowena asked.

'That would probably be Nott Snr,' Rabastan Lestrangle said.

Rowena turned to him. He was the only one who had said nothing so far. He had remained quiet and listened to everyone while saying nothing himself.

'I see,' Rowena said slowly. 'So, he has a son with the same name?'

'Yes,' replied Rabastan. 'He's the same age as Draco, a Slytherin as well. He's a good boy, smart.'

Rowena nodded. 'Same with Crabbe and Goyle Snr?' asked Rowena.

Rabastan nodded. 'They both have sons too. Both fathers' are idiots. Their sons aren't much brighter though.'

Again, Rowena nodded. She wondered why her father kept idiots around, if it was true. Unless, they both had someone stand up for them or if it was that they were useful in some situations. It made Rowena think. She looked at Rabastan for a while. He was busy darting looks at Bella.

'Are you married, Rabastan?'

He shook his head. 'No.'

'May I ask why?'

'Just never found the right pure-blooded woman,' he replied.

'And she needs to be a pure-blood, does she?'

That question caused everyone to look at Rowena sharply. She felt taken aback. Was blood still that important to some people?

'Yes, she does need to be a pure-blood. There aren't many left as you know.'

'Do you like people who aren't pure-blood?' Bella asked.

'Of course,' Rowena replied simply.

A few gasps went around. Macnair was the only person that remained quiet as he listened. 'Albus is a half-blood and I'm less than half myself.'

'But your father's a pure-blood,' Bella said quickly.

Rowena frowned inwardly. Did they really believe that her father was a pure-blood? Or did he tell them that himself? She wasn't quite sure what to say then she remembered her mother.

'My mother was a Muggle,' she said.

'But that would make you a half-blood,' said Evan frowning.

'So it would seem,' Rowena said before standing up. 'Forgive me; I must speak to my father. If you have any other questions, please feel free to ask later.'

She returned inside the mansion and she walked to her father's chambers. She knocked firmly and she heard a high cold voice telling her to enter. She opened the door and went in without any hesitation. She closed the door behind her, rougher than she normal would but she stopped abruptly as she took in the scene before her.

There was a girl, around her own age, kneeling on the floor in front of her father, his pet snake, Nagini, was circling her, hissing every few seconds. The girl was pink-faced with blonde hair, which was in pigtails. There were streams of tears rolling down her face.

'Come here, Rowena. Meet our new guest,' said Voldemort.

Rowena waited a moment before moving away from the door. She approached her father and Nagini stopped to hiss up at her. Rowena stuck her tongue out at the annoying snake and she hissed again, this time more viciously. Her father chuckled.

‘Please, settle down you two. I don’t want my two girls fighting,’ he cooed.

Rowena’s narrowed eyes looked away from the snake and she looked up at her father. ‘Who is this?’

‘An ex-Hogwarts student, a Hufflepuff I believe... Hannah Abbott. I have met your mother, my dear, she’s a nice woman, full of spirit,’ Voldemort said softly.

Rowena looked down at Hannah again. The tears were still there. ‘Why is she here?’ Rowena asked, looking back at her father.

‘She was captured in Hogsmeade by Yaxley and Mulciber. I’ve been told that she was a member of Dumbledore’s Army,’ Voldemort said calmly.

‘What?’ Rowena asked confused.

Voldemort turned to his daughter and he ran a couple of finger down a lock of her long and straight, dark brown hair. His scarlet eyes burned into her light brown ones. ‘I’m happy with how comfortable you’ve become with me and my followers after such a short period of time. You belong here with us, with me.’

‘I’m sure,’ Rowena said back. ‘I do feel comfortable here. That I can say and do anything.’

‘That’s because you can,’ said Voldemort.

Rowena smiled and Voldemort faintly returned it. ‘Why did you want to see me before?’ Voldemort asked.

‘Um, I wanted to know why your followers think that you’re a pure-blood,’ Rowena said after a long moment. She had temporarily forgotten why she came up here.

‘What makes you think I’m not a pure-blood?’ asked Voldemort.

‘Albus told me. Your mother was a pure-blood and your father was a Muggle, so... you have to be a half-blood,’ Rowena said uncertainly.

Right now, she was just hoping her father wasn’t going to take it the wrong way but his white face turned into ghostly smile. ‘And how did it come up in conversation?’

‘I asked Rabastan why he hasn’t married and he said that there weren’t too many pure-blooded women left and I asked if the woman had to be a pure-blood and they questioned about my heritage and Bellatrix mentioned about you being a pure-blood... which I know I know is untrue,’ Rowena said.

‘Yes, I trust you will keep it to yourself,’ Voldemort said sternly.

‘Of course,’ Rowena said quietly.

She was surprised at her father’s tone. Did this matter that much to him? She nodded her head quickly and turned the attention back to Hannah.

‘So... why is Hannah here? Why take her? And what is Dumbledore’s Army?’ Rowena asked in quick succession.

Voldemort chuckled. ‘I think you have a lot to learn about Dumbledore and Hogwarts and many other things,’ he said before looking at Hannah.

Voldemort withdrew his wand from his long, black robe and he hissed at Nagini, which Rowena understood, translated it meant to move away. The snake hissed and slithered along the floor away from Hannah and moved to her father’s bed, looking at and hissing at Rowena on the way past. Rowena’s eyes narrowed as she waited for Nagini to past her completely before she looked away. Voldemort was slightly amused as he watched.

Voldemort then bent down and lifted Hannah’s head by the chin. ‘Tell my daughter what Dumbledore’s Army is,’ he said gently.

Hannah breathed in and out shakily as more tears fell. She didn't appear to be able to speak now or at any time soon. Her father stood up and drew himself to his full height. 'Tell her now!' he yelled.

Hannah jumped at the volume of his voice and she audibly sobbed. Rowena wasn't sure how to feel about this as she watched it happen before her. Voldemort clicked his fingers and the door to his chambers opened and Rodolphus Lestrage walked in and approached Voldemort quickly, bowing at his feet. When he stood up Voldemort indicated to Hannah and Rodolphus nodded.

He walked over to Hannah and he brutally kicked her in the stomach. Hannah fell on the floor on her side and she cried out in pain as she wrapped her arms around herself. She continued to cry but she still said nothing. Voldemort nodded his head again and Rodolphus then kicked her in the legs before picking her up roughly by the hair.

Hannah shrieked and her face became wetter. 'Please,' she begged. 'Please... no more...'

'Then tell my daughter what Dumbledore's Army is,' Voldemort said firmly.

'It's a group w-where were practiced d-defence against the dark a-arts,' said Hannah, stumbling.

'Who led the group?' Rowena asked.

Hannah frowned up at Rowena and she received a hair pulling from Rodolphus, she gasped. 'How did you know there was a l-leader?'

'Well, there had to be. Someone had to be teaching it to you, otherwise you would have been learning it blindly, without really knowing what you're doing,' Rowena said quickly.

'Harry led us,' Hannah said.

'Harry Potter?' Rowena questioned. 'Really? How interesting...'

Rowena walked away and she went to the window. She didn't find it hard to believe that Harry would take it upon himself to teach other students what knowledge he knew.

'Would you like to have the honour of killing this one?' Voldemort asked.

'No,' Rowena said quickly.

Voldemort approached Rowena and looked down at her. He seemed slightly taken aback. 'No? May I ask why?'

'Because I think she could be useful. I'm suggesting that you keep her here, just for a little while. She may have more information that could be of some use.'

'We could just extract it from her mind,' Voldemort suggested.

'No, father, even you know there are more fun ways to do something like this,' Rowena said coyly. Voldemort smiled at her but he didn't interrupt. 'And you know the others could have some fun also. I believe once she learns that there is no escape she will, in time, give information freely.'

Voldemort's eyes narrowed but he said nothing, so Rowena continued. 'The Order does not know where you are... no-one besides you and your followers know that you are here. This could work to your advantage. You could take all the time you need with this one and any others that may be caught.'

'You are cleverer than I could have imagined,' Voldemort said with a faint smile. 'And I think I shall take your suggestion and keep Miss Abbott here. We could use her to extract information, when we need it, and she shall provide some... entertainment for the others.'

Rowena heard Hannah sob again before Rodolphus stood her onto her feet and took her from the room. Rowena looked at her father quickly. 'He knows where to put her,' her father said softly.

'I see,' said Rowena.

Any trace of Voldemort's smile disappeared and he walked to the door after a long silence. Rowena was still standing at the window, though there wasn't much to see. She walked away from the window and looked at her father, who was looking back.

'I think it's time for another meeting.'



## Chapter Eleven – New Followers

The door creaked open and Voldemort left his chambers and Rowena nodded before following. A hiss echoed up at her and she stopped to let Nagini through first. Rowena rolled her eyes. She wanted to get rid of this snake. It seemed to be jealous of her. Rowena wasn't sure if she had ever heard of anything so stupid.

Back in the living room, all the Death Eaters were already standing in a circle. Rowena couldn't but help wonder how they knew they were having a meeting. She watched her father walked into the circle again but she stayed outside this time. He walked around them a few times before saying anything.

'Please, all of you have a seat around the table. We have things to discuss.'

The Death Eaters moved quickly and seated themselves at the long, silver table in the room. Voldemort sat at the top and looked down the table at all his followers. He then looked to Rowena.

'Rowena, my dear, come and sit next to me,' he said pointing to the seat on his immediate right.

Rowena nodded and walked over cautiously. She was aware of all the eyes on the room on her. When she sat down Voldemort addressed his pet snake, which was crawling along the floor, underneath the table. 'You may rest.'

Rowena looked around. Most people were frowning and some appeared frightened and looked away quickly. She then understood. Her father had spoken to Nagini in Parseltongue. Rowena wondered if he ever spoke English to her. Rowena then frowned to herself; maybe the snake wouldn't understand it.

'I am glad you are all here,' her father began. 'There are things to discuss. We have some new followers joining us later tonight.'

A murmur of delighted gasps went around the table. Rowena kept her eyes on nothing but the top of the table, which was made of glass. She was determined to not look at anyone.

‘But before we get to that, my daughter needs protection and I want someone to look out for her. I will not be choosing, however.’ Voldemort addressed his daughter. ‘Rowena, you may choose anyone you like.’

‘Um... why do I need protection?’ she asked.

‘It’s for just in case purposes. If something should happen then you’ll have someone watching out for you and it will become his first priority. But if you do not want someone...’

‘No,’ said Rowena, interrupting gently. ‘I am more than happy to pick someone, but does it have to be now?’

‘No, of course not, you may take your time in choosing,’ Voldemort replied.

‘Thank you.’

He bowed his head towards her before looking back at his followers. ‘Now that it done, I will tell you of our new friends, they will be joining us later tonight and Draco, I’m sure you know most of them.’

‘I’m sure I will, my Lord,’ Draco said back politely. His voice was tight and he was looking at his lap. His parents were sitting on either side of Draco and they hadn’t moved nor said anything themselves.

Rowena looked over at him. When she looked away, her eyes caught Walden’s and he smiled at her. Rowena instantly looked away. She frowned inwardly. What was wrong with her? She never felt like this around anyone. She looked back at her father; a thought seemed to come to him suddenly.

‘My dear,’ he whispered. ‘Do you know of anyone who would join us?’

‘I don’t think so, father,’ she replied politely.

'It does not matter,' he said looking back to his followers.

The room went quiet and Voldemort continued the meeting. Rowena watched her father during most of it. She couldn't believe that he was entirely happy to hear that he had a child but it didn't help that she hardly knew anything about this man. She only knew the small things which Albus told her, which wasn't much at all. She needed more than that.

When the meeting ended most Death Eaters left the room and went elsewhere. Voldemort gestured to Rowena for her to follow him which she did. They returned to his private chambers and Voldemort conjured a couple of black armchairs again.

'Would you like something to drink?' he asked.

'No, thank you, I'm fine,' she said sitting down.

'Now,' he said sitting down himself. 'I'm sending a few of my followers on a raid tomorrow, perhaps you would like to join them?' he said, choosing his words carefully, gauging her reaction.

'I suppose I could,' said Rowena. 'What would happen?'

'Well, they usually kill most people but I let them have some fun, torture or sexually, whatever they please,' Voldemort said. By his tone, he almost sounded bored. Rowena wondered how many times they had done this before.

She felt surprised by his answer but then wondered if she should have been. From her own actions, she should have learnt that she took after her father.

'You could just watch, if you wish,' her father said, still watching her.

'I will go,' Rowena said slowly.

'Good.'

Rowena nodded to herself and stood up. She reached the door when her father spoke again. 'And perhaps afterwards, you'll tell me the truth about what happened with your mother.'

Rowena stopped in her tracks and froze. She then moved and left the room without turning or looking at her father again. She walked to her own chambers and lay down on the bed. She felt tired. She wanted to sleep but she knew it could wait. There were still things to do today and more people to meet.

Later that night Rowena left her chambers and she went downstairs. Her father and his followers were already in the room. When she walked in she approached her father and he gestured to the chair on his right. Rowena smiled faintly and she sat down. She then looked around the room, she couldn't see Nagini anywhere.

The room was quiet. Rowena knew they were all waiting for more people to arrive and Rowena wondered if someone was escorting them here. She looked around tried to see which Death Eater was missing. It didn't take long. Yaxley was the only Death Eater not here. He must be the person bringing the new members here.

It didn't take long for the front door to creak open and many footsteps echoed into the front hall of the mansion. Yaxley walked into the living-room and he waited at the door for the rest of them to join him. They all walked in slowly and cautiously. Some appeared nervous, while others looked afraid, and some just looked like they were at home already.

Rowena looked among them but, of course, she didn't recognise anyone. Yaxley moved into the room more and he brought people out one by one and he introduced them.

'My Lord, this is Theodore Nott Jr, he is more than willing to join you,' said Yaxley.

Voldemort's face turned into another ghostly smile and he nodded his head once to acknowledge the new person. Yaxley then sent him over to the side, where he stood patiently. Yaxley then brought the next person forwards.

‘This is Daphne Greengrass. She was more than eager to join.’

Rowena looked the girl over. She was tall and slender with short, spiky light blonde hair. She was pale and her face was cold looking, her eyes a bright, steeled green. Rowena looked at the girl’s body next, in Rowena’s opinion she was a little too thin. She moved over and stood beside Theodore after bowing to Voldemort. Rowena’s eyes then turned to the next person.

‘This is Marcus Flint, my Lord.’

From the small group of people a tall, musclier man walked out and stood beside Yaxley. Rowena then looked him over and few times. He had a brutal looking face, which made Rowena think he could have been part-troll. His black hair was shiny and quite short; his dark eyes searched the room and looked at all people around the table.

The next person was Vincent Crabbe. He was stocky with short, dark brown hair. He only looked at his father before moving over to the other side of the room. Gregory Goyle walked out next and Rowena saw the small look between father and son. Greg was medium-height and stocky with short, wiry hair and long gorilla-like arms. He stood there for a shorter period of time than Vincent did.

‘My Lord, this is Pansy Parkinson.’

Pansy was a tall and slender girl with a pug-like face, fair blonde hair that went just past her shoulders and she had pale grey eyes. She looked a little nervous but all the same she looked around the room confidently before joining the others. The next person was Adrian Pucey. He was tall, with black hair and a good athletic body and blue/green eyes. Rowena thought they were quite pretty.

Then Paul Harper was introduced. Rowena wasn’t sure about this person. His face was blank; he seemed unsure about the reasons why he was here. He was medium height with light brown hair and dull blue eyes. The next person was Terence Higgs. He had dirty blonde hair and brown eyes. He moved the quickest from all of them.

After him was Jason Vaisey, he had black hair and dark eyes. Rowena thought him to be quite overpowering in appearance.

The next person was Miles Bletchley who was stout with dark red/brown hair and hazel eyes. He too bowed to Voldemort before moving away and Rowena noticed there were only two people left, a girl and a boy. The girl seemed to have a good hold on the other boys arm. The boy seemed like he wanted to be anywhere but here but he didn't move, the girl holding him was much bigger than him.

The girl moved forwards and dragged the boy along with her. 'This is Millicent Bulstrode and the boy she's holding is Blaise Zabini. He was with some of these people and he was told about coming here. He was going to leave but I don't think we could have that happen,' said Yaxley.

'No, of course not,' said Voldemort, agreeing.

Rowena looked at her father quickly before turning back. Millicent was a large girl with a heavy jaw which she was sticking out aggressively. She had medium brown hair with hazel eyes and Rowena couldn't help but notice how large her chest was. She then looked at the boy, who now standing in the light; Rowena saw some light bruises on his face. Rowena was sure the others saw them too but no-one said anything about it. Blaise was tall, slender and black. His black eyes looked around fearfully. Rowena especially loved his lined eyes, they were beautiful and slanted, it looked graceful above his high cheek bones but Rowena thought he would look better if he wasn't frightened right now.

'I think you should take him to a cell, Yaxley and we can deal with him later,' Voldemort said softly.

Yaxley bowed his head and took a good hold of Blaise and pulled him down a hidden staircase in the next room. Rowena watched as Millicent joined the other students and along with everyone else she watched as her father got to his feet and walked over to the group. He looked among them and he seemed quite pleased.

‘I am happy to welcome you and I'm pleased that you have chosen to join me. You shall be initiated later; first I'm sending some people on a raid tomorrow. It will be done after that.’

His words sent a strong sense of commandment around the room and Rowena couldn't help but notice how everyone listened and almost hung on every word. Thinking of loyalty, Rowena looked over at Bella. She was on the edge of her seat and Rowena kept watching, wondering when she was going to fall off. Rowena could tell that Bella longed for closeness with her father. Rowena wondered, though, if Bella knew it was never going to happen.

The meeting ended not long after all the introductions had been made. Rowena had said nothing during the meeting and she then returned to her room. She had decided on going on the raid with the others tomorrow but she was nervous about it. She had never done anything like this before and all she could think about was what she was going to see.

The next night, Rowena stood in the front hall of the mansion and she leaned against one of the small walls. She was feeling scared and she kept getting a nagging feeling that something would go wrong. Her father kept telling her that she was worried about nothing but Rowena wasn't so sure. Though, she knew her father and his followers had done this more times than her but it still didn't help.

There were a handful of Death Eaters joining her including Yaxley, Dolohov, Amicus, Alecto, Bella, Rodolphus, Walden, Rookwood and Evan. Rowena was dressed in Death Eater robes, though she reminded her father that she's only borrowing them for this and that would be it. She had tied her dark brown hair into a high ponytail and she had her wand out already. She wasn't prepared to leave it in her pocket. When her father entered the front hall, he walked to Rowena and stood beside her.

‘Tonight, you are raiding a Muggle village. You may do as you wish but do not get caught. My daughter will be in charge of what happens. No-one is to harm her and you will all watch out for her. If there is any hint of the Order showing up, leave immediately. They are not to know that Rowena is with you.’

All Death Eaters nodded and Rowena did too. She put the hood over to her and she took a deep breath. Voldemort grabbed her arms and turned her to him. 'You'll be fine. They will do as they're told, if not, they know punishment is imminent.'

Rowena nodded and Voldemort kissed her on the cheek before sending them all on their way. Rowena didn't think her father would do anything like that but Rowena knew not to become too trusting of him. He could still turn around at any time and ordered her killed or he could just do it himself. Rowena knew he wanted to know how powerful and capable she was but Rowena wasn't sure she wanted to risk her life just to please him.

They left the Manor together and made their way down the long, dark road. When they came to the end they all stopped and huddled into a tight group. Rowena noticed they were holding onto each other. Dolohov placed his hand on her arm and before she could say anything she felt herself being pulled roughly. They began to spin and they eventually landed in another place.

Rowena stood and looked around. They were certainly in a Muggle village. It was dark and there was no-one to be seen out. Some houses had lights but most didn't. The Death Eaters began to move but Rowena quietly told them to stop. They did, some reluctantly though and they walked over to Rowena. She looked at them all before speaking.

'Do you have a plan or do you just go in?'

'What do you care?' Bella asked impatiently.

Walden punched Bella in the arm. 'Have some respect Bella; she might have a good point. If we have a good plan then we might not attract too much attention too quickly.'

Some people nodded in agreement. 'We normally just go in,' Yaxley told her, 'but we could do something else if you prefer?'

'How long until someone notices anything?' Rowena asked.



'If it's a Muggle village it's not noticed for a while,' Yaxley replied. 'But sometimes things can and do go wrong. If we stay too long or make too much noise it alerts people.'

'Ok, just go in and do what you do but be quiet about it,' said Rowena.

The Death Eaters smiled and they walked towards the village. Rowena went with them but she stopped half-way there. She wasn't joining in; she just wanted to see what happens. After a bit Walden stopped and went back to Rowena. 'Would you like me to stay with you?'

'No, I'll be fine. I can look after myself. Go and have fun,' said Rowena.

He winked and smiled at her before joining Evan and going into one of the houses nearby. She heard a few screams of terror but they were all quickly silenced. Within an hour the Death Eaters had killed most people and rounded up the rest. They took the rest of the Muggles a small hall, which Rowena was sure held functions and parties and things, since there were old balloons around the room. She walked inside and joined the Death Eaters where they were standing.

'You're finished already?' she asked.

'Not really,' Evan said with a smile. 'Now we have some fun with them.'

'Like what?' asked Rowena.

'We can torture, kill more or... rape, if we wish,' Evan replied.

'I see,' Rowena said quietly.

She moved to the back of the hall and she stood in one of the corners. She wasn't interested in participating in any of these activities but she couldn't help but watch everyone else. She saw Evan beat a young teenage girl to the ground before kicking her and hauling her to her

knees. Rookwood was holding a middle-aged man against the wall and was threatening him with his wand. The man was pleading for the lives of his wife and children without worrying about his own, though Rookwood continued to ignore him.

On the other side of the room, Rodolphus was raping a girl from behind while she leaned against the wall, screaming for him to stop. Bella was with them and she leaned against the wall herself, beside the girl. Rowena saw Bella smile and stroke the girl's wet cheek with one finger. She stopped her screaming and she shivered before sobbing some more.

Rowena looked away and she saw Dolohov and Yaxley share another girl. But Rowena frowned a little; this girl seemed a little too young. Rowena was sure she was under the age of seventeen. Rowena just hoped they didn't know this fact. The next thing Rowena saw almost shocked her to the core and she couldn't explain why. She watched Amycus shove his sister into the wall and kiss her ferociously. Aleto accepted him and she wrapped her arms around him. Rowena couldn't help but stare. Did they do that often? Weren't they related?

After a long while Rowena managed to look away and catch Walden's eye. He was sitting on a tall chair while a girl on her knees sucked him off. He placed a hand on the back of the girls' head, pushing her down onto him further. She gasped audibly and gagged but Walden ignored it, he kept his eyes on Rowena and nothing else. Rowena felt her cheeks gradually go a faint pink and she looked away. She felt slightly breathless, even though she hadn't done anything yet.

Rowena waved her wand and she conjured a chair and she sat down. When it was almost three in the morning Rowena stood up and she got rid of the chair she was sitting on. She sighed and leaned against the wall again. Rowena couldn't believe that most people were still having fun. She wondered if her father let them take their time. Rowena snapped her head to the side as Walden walked over and stood beside her. He smiled at her. Rowena looked away.

'Don't you want to have some fun?' he asked moving a little closer.

Rowena looked down at her shirt, where Walden's fingers were playing with the bottom. Walden nodded straight away and removed his hand. He got the message from her stare. He still smiled at her though, his blue eyes searching her pale face. Rowena ignored him as much as possible.

Suddenly, there was a loud noise outside. It sounded like a rumble of thunder but Rowena knew it wasn't, as did the Death Eaters in the room. 'It must be the Order,' Yaxley said loudly. 'Let's go!'

The door to the hall exploded open and Walden grabbed Rowena's arm and he ran, taking her with him. They ran to the other side and they smashed through a window. He got up immediately and he still had a hold of Rowena and they continued to run. There were a couple people behind them.

'Stop!'

Rowena knew that voice. As they continued to run she turned. She saw Remus Lupin chasing them. Rowena's eyes widened. 'We have to apparate, forget the others, they can find their way back, you have to get me out of here and unseen but by that may not be possible now. Leave me here,' Rowena said quickly.

'I can't do that,' Walden panted back.

'Let her go!' Remus shouted.

Another Order member stepped out in front of them. Rowena knew that person too; it was none other than Harry Potter. He frowned at them as though he was confused. Walden stopped and so did Rowena. 'Let her go!' Remus repeated.

Walden shook his head. He quickly moved his arm and they disappeared on the spot with a loud crack. When they landed Walden's grasp on Rowena slipped and she fell to the ground. Her knees were weak. Walden scooped her into his arms and he carried her back to the manor. Once inside the door Rowena turned to him.

‘Put me down,’ she demanded.

‘As you wish.’

Walden placed her onto her feet and they walked into the living-room together. All of the other Death Eaters there had returned. Rowena immediately looked at her father, who looked whiter than normal, if that were possible. He walked over to them. ‘What took so long?’ he asked loudly.

‘Father!’ Rowena said back just as loud. ‘Walden just saved me from being caught, though I was seen, by Lupin and Harry, though I’m not sure what they’ll make of it, but I’m lucky that Walden was stubborn and wouldn’t leave without me.’

‘Is that true?’ asked Voldemort, now looking at Walden, who nodded a couple of times. ‘Then you have my thanks and you shall be greatly rewarded.’

For some reason, Rowena quickly looked over at Bella, who looked livid. The small after meeting in the living-room didn’t last long and Rowena went up to her room and straight into the bathroom for a shower. She felt dirty. She had seen many things tonight that she had never seen before and she was sure it could and probably does get worse. Rowena was just happy that she didn’t have to join in tonight, though she was sure her father would never force her to join in.

After a long shower, Rowena changed into clean bed clothes and she lay down on her side. She sighed heavily and looked at the wall. She sometimes wondered if she could fall asleep here and wake up somewhere else and realise that this had all been just a dream.

In the morning Rowena went down into the drawing room this time, where her father was alone with Nagini. She approached both of them and her father turned to her.

‘Are you alright after last night?’

‘Yes, I am fine,’ Rowena replied.

‘Good. I was hoping you would have a little talk with Blaise this morning,’ her father said gently.

‘Why me?’ she asked, frowning.

‘I just thought you might want to practice on someone and besides, if you do take after me you might be quite good at manipulating people and turning them to your cause. Just give it a try,’ Voldemort prompted.

‘Very well,’ she said lightly.

Voldemort took his wand out and pointed it at the floor. A small door opened in the drawing room and it was larger than Rowena expected it to be. She could see stairs leading down. ‘The cells are down there?’ she questioned.

Her father nodded and Rowena walked down slowly. She walked along the small, dark and narrow corridor until she came to one of only two doors which were closed and therefore locked. She looked in one and saw Hannah. She was still here and someone must have been feeding her because there was still some uneaten food in there. She went to the other door and saw Blaise.

Rowena opened the door and walked in. Blaise looked up at her quickly before looking back into space. He was chained to the wall but he had been allowed to sit. Rowena looked around the cell. It was filthy. The walls were dark and almost black, as was the floor and it didn’t smell all that great either.

‘You don’t really want to stay in here, do you?’ asked Rowena.

‘Of course I don’t,’ he hissed back.

‘Then why make it more difficult than it needs to be?’ Rowena asked softly.

‘Because I don’t want to join you or your father,’ he said.

'If you don't, you'll die in here, you must know this,' Rowena said delicately.

Blaise looked up at her. Rowena only saw a small amount of fear in his eyes. Rowena moved closer and she flicked her wand. It slowly moved the chains upwards, forcing Blaise to his feet. Rowena moved them just a little bit more, so that Blaise was barely touching the floor. He gasped faintly and Rowena walked over and stood an inch from his body. She looked up at him and she waited but Blaise said nothing, he spat in Rowena's face.

She closed her eyes and breathed for a moment and the cell door opened. Rodolphus walked in and approached Blaise quickly and kicked him into the legs but Rowena shoved him away. 'No, stop,' she said quickly.

It went quiet, except for Blaise who was breathing heavily. Rowena could tell he was in pain. 'You can leave. I can deal with this alone,' she said firmly.

Rodolphus nodded. 'Very well, but I'll be outside if you need anything.'

He left the room without any hesitation and he closed the door behind him. Rowena wiped her face with her sleeve and she stood right in front of Blaise again and looked up at him. She needed him to know that she was in charge, not him and no matter what he did he wasn't getting out of this.

'You won't be leaving, I'm sure you know this too,' Rowena said slowly. 'You might as well face facts and join my father. It will not be easy for you to leave without being killed.'

Blaise remained quiet but he kept his eyes on Rowena. She leaned forwards and ripped his shirt off, and then his long, black pants. Rowena looked over Blaise's body subtly. He looked really good. His chest was taut and muscular but his body still seemed to remain delicate. Blaise hissed through his teeth as the cold air hit his skin. 'It will only get colder and if you do not want to die here then I suggest you change your mind.'

There was a long pause. 'Accept your fate,' she whispered before leaving the room, closing and locking the door behind her. Rowena walked back up to the drawing room and she told her father what she had just done.

## Chapter Twelve – Punishment and Plans

The mood at Grimmauld Place was quite gloomy and most members of the Order couldn't believe they missed the signs of a raid. They weren't able to save most people and it bothered all members. Remus Lupin sat at the table beside his wife and with the rest of the Order. He kept trying to tell everyone what he saw but no one seemed willing to believe him.

'Albus, I'm telling you, Rowena was being held by Macnair and she was holding her wand. If she wanted to get away from him and go with us, she could have,' said Remus. He almost sounded angry. At the moment, he was frustrated and annoyed that no one was listening.

'I know what Rowena is like, she wasn't about to risk her life and ours by trying to save herself,' Albus said calmly.

'What are you talking about!?' Remus said angrily. 'I keep telling you and you're not listening. Rowena could have pushed Macnair or even cursed him but she didn't. She went with him willingly.'

'Maybe there's a reason why she did go with him,' Tonks suggested.

'We both know there's no other reason,' Remus said harshly. 'She has joined with her father.'

He immediately felt guilty talking to his wife that way but it was annoying that not even his wife believed him about what he saw. 'I know what I saw, Albus.'

'I do not agree, I do not think Rowena would join Voldemort and besides, you're the only one who says this. What about Harry?'

A lot of people turned and looked at Harry, who had been fidgeting with his fingers. He looked up and glanced around. He shrugged slightly. 'Remus, I'm sorry but I'm not really sure what I saw.'

Remus' face contorted into anger again but Harry continued before Remus could say anything more. 'But Remus, everything happened so quickly. I'm not really sure what happened.'



'Oh Harry, come on, you were there!' Remus said loudly.

'I know that Remus, but everything happened so fast. I remember seeing Rowena, I don't think she was willing to try and get away. To me she looked scared and out of breath. I thought she was being dragged along.'

'She could have used her wand!' Remus said, his eyes widening.

'But maybe she didn't for a reason. Macnair might have killed her or...'

'You don't really believe that,' said Remus, looking at Harry.

'Why not?' Harry asked frowning.

'Then why didn't Macnair or someone else disarm her. She must have been there because she wanted to be. Why was she allowed to keep her wand?'

'Maybe she was threatened,' Hermione suggested.

Remus glared at Hermione but he said nothing to her. Hermione went shy and she looked away. Remus stood up and he looked around. 'I don't believe this.' He looked at Albus. 'Why would I lie about this? I know what I saw, Albus and I won't let this go, I know what I saw,' Remus said again before storming from the room.

Everyone in the room went silent. No-one knew what to say after Remus' outburst. After a long silence, Molly looked at Albus. 'So, you don't believe what Remus saw?'

Albus shrugged and he sighed as he placed his hands together. 'I'm really not sure what to believe. Maybe when things calm down we'll talk about it again. I am disappointed that they got away with Rowena. I don't believe she would betray me but I know she's quite like her father.'

'What if he did turn her to his side?' Harry asked.

Albus sighed again. 'Well, then, we might have a problem. I would like to think I know her enough to know that she won't join her father. She must know that he's evil.'

'It doesn't mean he won't be able to convince her,' Sirius said tightly.

'Yes, I agree,' Albus said steadily. 'And we'll have to be ready for that possibility.'

At the beginning of October, Rowena was still with her father and his followers at the Malfoy Manor. Rowena began to feel like she was at home. She had gone back down to the cells many times to talk to Blaise and she had given his clothes back to him, she felt awful letting him freeze to death. The next time she walked down she noticed that Hannah wasn't in her cell anymore. She frowned but she kept on walking to Blaise's cell. When she opened the door, she saw Fenrir in there with him.

It looked as though Fenrir was taunting him. Rowena was surprised to see a few tears actually fall down Blaise's cheeks, he looked terrified and his eyes went straight to the cell door as it opened. He seemed relieved to see Rowena walk in. Fenrir didn't take much notice and he licked Blaise's cheek, soaking up some of Blaise's tears.

'Nice and salty,' he whispered.

Blaise exhaled weakly through his teeth. He turned his head away from Fenrir; it was obvious that Blaise was frightened.

'Get out,' said Rowena, softly.

Fenrir turned and looked at her. At first, she thought he was going to refuse or tell her to wait her turn but he must have considered his options and he turned and left the cell slowly, not taking his eyes off Rowena, who in turn watched him too. When the door closed behind him, Rowena moved over to Blaise, who was still hanging where she left him, but now with his clothes back, though they had now been ripped. Rowena was sure Fenrir had done that.

'Please...' he begged her, more tears falling down his face.

'Then join with my father. It's as easy as that.'

'I c-can't.'

'Why?'

'Because what your father's doing is wrong, you both know it,' he said. Blaise seemed unable to breathe properly; it must be the coldness in the room.

'Just join us.'

'I need more than that,' Blaise said heaving slightly.

'Alright, how about this, if you join I will look after you until you're comfortable. I can make sure the others leave you alone,' she said softly.

There was a long pause. Rowena was patient. 'Really... you can do that?'

'Yes.'

'But why would you? Why for me? What makes me so special?'

'Nothing, I suppose. But think of it this way. You either join or die. It's quite simple. And I'm sure my father would prefer more followers.'

'But wouldn't he prefer people who actually want to follow him?' Blaise asked uncomfortably.

'Maybe, but after a time you might change your mind,' said Rowena.

'Perhaps.' Blaise paused again. 'Fine, I'll join your father, but you have to stick to your promise to help me.'

'I will. I shall go and talk to him at the next meeting. You stay here for now,' Rowena said.

Blaise went quiet and Rowena went to see her father, who was in the living-room, sitting in an armchair by the fire. Nagini was lying around the top of it, asleep. Though it didn't last long. As Rowena approached Nagini stirred and she hissed loudly but Rowena ignored her and stood beside the armchair.

'Yes, my dear, is there something you want?'

'I have finally gotten through to Blaise. He is willing to join, as long as I look out for him...' her father turned to look at her sharply. '...just until he gets comfortable and used to this. He knows that it's this or death.'

'That's good,' said Voldemort. 'We shall have a meeting tonight and it shall be discussed. Do want you want with him until later.'

Rowena nodded and she went back into the drawing-room and back down to the cells. She entered Blaise's cell and with her wand she removed the chains and shackles, causing Blaise to fall to the ground, hard. He gasped loudly and swore under his breath.

'Sorry,' Rowena said with a wry smile.

It took a while but Blaise forced himself to his feet and Rowena gestured for him to follow her. 'Come with me,' she said softly.

She led Blaise upstairs and into her private chambers and she did notice all the looks Blaise got on the way. She could tell some people just thought it would be better if he died. Rowena knew it would take a while for anyone to trust him, and maybe it wouldn't happen at all. They both entered her private chambers and she led him into the bathroom. Rowena got a clean towel and placed it on the basin.

'Have a shower and clean yourself up, I'll have some clean robes for you when you finish.'

She left the bathroom and she eventually heard the water turn on. She then left her chambers to get some robes. She returned with them and placed them on her bed. The water in the bathroom was still running. Rowena frowned at the door. Why couldn't she hear any other noises?

She raised her wand. 'Homenum Revelio,' she whispered.

Her wand jerked before showing small dots in front of her. She looked down and saw that there were people below her and she looked at the bathroom door. There was no-one in there. Her eyes widened and she ran downstairs and made for the front door but it opened just before her hand could touch the brass knob. The door opened itself and Bella walked in with Fenrir, both holding Blaise.

They walked past her, Bella smiling evilly, and made their way to the living-room, Rowena followed. Her father stood and approached Blaise first. 'You must be smarter than this,' he said softly. 'This manor is protected by many charms, did you really think you'd get away?' he hissed.

'I don't want to be here,' he said back. 'But I don't want to die either.'

'Well,' Voldemort said slowly, 'you're going to have to choose which fate you would like. You either join or die, which is what my daughter told you and I suspect she put too much faith in you.'

As the words left Voldemort's mouth he turned to look at his daughter. He walked over and stood right in front of her, looking down at her. Rowena breathed calmly for a moment before looking up at him. 'I'm sorry,' she whispered, so only he could hear it.

'I'm sure you are, my dear, but you trusted him far too much. It cannot happen again,' he said.

'It won't,' Rowena said quickly.

'I know it won't,' Voldemort said. 'And you're going to make sure of it.'

Rowena frowned. She didn't understand. Voldemort smiled. 'Kill him,' her father said softly.

'But... why?' she asked, stumbling slightly.

'You gave him a choice and he has chosen death,' her father said. 'Kill him now.'

'How?' she asked tightly.

'In any way you please,' said Voldemort, smiling.

Rowena nodded her head a few times before moving. She wanted to think this through a little. She knew it was too late for Blaise. She had tried to save him, to look after him but he wouldn't take it. He would prefer to die then join her father and she knew they couldn't have someone like that around. Her father would much prefer have someone who would die for him.

Minutes went by but her father had said nothing more. He had walked back to his chair and sat down. He was waiting for it patiently. She cocked her head at Bella, who came forwards with Blaise and placed him in the middle of the room and she moved away and stood beside her husband.

Rowena flicked her wand and Blaise fell onto his knees. Then, Rowena hesitated. She looked into Blaise's black eyes and something within her rocked. Could she kill an innocent person for no reason? She felt a tug-of-war playing in her mind but she knew her father's patience was wearing thin.

'Do it or I'll have you punished,' Voldemort said viciously.

Rowena let out a shaky breath. She didn't want to use the killing curse but it would be the quickest way for him to die and Rowena knew it. Then, Nagini hissed loudly and her body hit the floor with a thump.

'Wait,' Rowena said loudly. 'Give me a minute.'

Rowena hung her head and she took a deep breath. A big part of her didn't want this, but she knew Blaise was going to die one way or another and if she didn't do it, someone else would. More time went by and still Rowena had done nothing.

'I cannot...'

'Crucio!'

Her sentence was cut short as her father sent the torture curse at her. Rowena fell to the ground and she writhed around in pain. She wanted to scream but nothing came out. When the curse was released, she remained on the ground. Her father then ignored her.

'Dolohov, take Mr. Zabini back to his cell, do with him as you see fit.'

Dolohov walked out from the circle and he bowed at Voldemort before grabbing Blaise by the back of the neck and dragging him into the drawing room. Rowena remained on the ground and she heard the trap door open and a heavy sound being pulled down. A small, singular tear ran down the side of Rowena's face and it disappeared into her hair.

Rowena then yelped loudly as she was picked up and placed on her feet. Bella was the person holding her and Rowena felt a surge of anger flow through her.

'Get your hands off me,' she yelled.

Voldemort nodded his head once and Bella let go of her and walked away. Rowena panted slightly where she stood and her father walked over to her again. He looked into her light brown eyes, his scarlet ones glowing faintly.

'I am disappointed,' he hissed. 'Next time I tell you do to something, I expect you to do it.'

Rowena just nodded. 'Leave my presence before I change my mind.'

Rowena nodded again and she went upstairs and entered her chambers quickly. In her anger she went to the wardrobe and kicked it heavily. There was a slight thud but the wardrobe didn't move. Angry tears flowed down Rowena's face and she screamed in frustration. She knew there was a chance that he would have killed her. She knew what he meant by "before I change my mind".

She sat on her bed and she looked at the floor. She knew things had to change. She had to change.

A few days later, Rowena finally ventured out of her chambers. She hadn't been game enough to go down and see her father. She needed to see if things would calm down a little first. She looked around the Manor but she couldn't find anyone. She gave up after a while and went out into the backyard and sat down at the small table again. It didn't take long for someone else to join her again.

This time it was just Draco and he was alone. Like most of the other Death Eaters, he was dressed entirely in black and his pale face shined in the sunlight. He looked around nervously before walking over and sitting opposite Rowena. He looked her over before saying anything.

'No one's here, not even the Dark Lord.'

'Do you know where they are?'

Draco nodded. 'Yeah, they've gone to see about having a meeting with the Order.'

Rowena frowned. 'What do you mean a meeting?'

'Your father wants to set them up or something. I'm sure he'll inform you when they get back, which shouldn't be much longer,' he said quietly.

Rowena nodded. 'What happened to Blaise?' asked Rowena, after a short pause.

Draco shrugged. 'I don't know.'



'You don't know?' Rowena asked. 'Aren't you a Death Eater?'

'Yeah, but I'm one of the younger Death Eaters, I'm not told as much as the rest.'

'I see,' Rowena said slowly. 'Have the new people been branded yet?'

'No,' Draco said shaking his head. 'Happens tonight, I think.'

Rowena nodded. The back door opened and a few more people walked out. It was Walden, Alecko and Yaxley. Draco watched too. 'They must be back already.'

Rowena stood up and approached Walden who stopped walking. 'Is my father back too?'

Walden nodded and Rowena quickly walked inside and she went straight to the living-room. Voldemort turned quickly but when he saw it was Rowena he relaxed quickly. He walked over to her. 'We have some things to discuss. I'm calling a meeting.'

'Before you do I have something to say,' she said quickly.

Voldemort stopped and waited to hear what she had to say. 'I'm sorry about the other night. I should have listened to you. I'm just not used to this.'

Voldemort smiled vaguely. 'It will get better, I promise.'

The Death Eaters came into the room and everyone sat down at the long table. Voldemort waited for it to become silent before he spoke.

'I have called this meeting to discuss a new plan.'

Most Death Eaters in the room sat up straighter and kept their eyes on Voldemort as he continued. 'My daughter must go back with the Order and we are going to set them up for a fight, a trap, if you will.'

Rowena needs to become injured and we need to just give her back to Dumbledore.'

Voldemort then focused all of his attention onto his daughter. 'And you, my dear, when you get back with the Order, I have a plan for you. I want you to make Dumbledore pity you. He and the others will think you have suffered greatly. We can go over details later.'

Rowena nodded and her father went on to talk about other things but Rowena tuned out a little. But after the meeting Rowena returned to her chambers and she went to bed. The plan was for tomorrow night and Rowena was nervous about seeing the Order again.

The next night, Rowena joined her father and the other Death Eaters at the door. Her father went over his plan with Rowena and she knew what to do now. Rowena just wished she didn't actually have to suffer anything. A couple of Death Eaters broke a couple of ribs and her arm, along with fracturing her left leg.

Walden carried Rowena in his arms and they all left together. When they arrived at the next place Rowena looked at Walden. 'Where are we?'

'In a small village called Caldwell. It's inhabited mostly by Muggles but there are a few witches and wizards,' he replied.

Voldemort walked around and he nodded. The Dark Mark was conjured and hung high in the sky and it didn't take long for the screaming and the panicking to start. The Death Eaters went around the small village quickly burning the houses as they went along and getting rid of anyone in their way.

'Over here,' Voldemort said calmly, through all the things happening around him.

Walden walked over and as the panic and screaming began to die down, there was another sound. 'The Order,' Rowena breathed. She was in a lot of pain.

Walden placed her on the ground and they threw her wand away from her. 'Do not forget,' Voldemort said before quickly disappearing.

Rowena lifted her head slowly and she could see all the Death Eaters leaving, her father was nowhere to be seen. She then almost vomited as she saw the dead bodies lying around her. Blood pooled on the cement and was beginning to dry and thicken quickly. Rowena wished they would hurry up, the smell was awful.

At least an hour later, Rowena could hear voices. She knew it was the Order but she wanted to know who it was first. She could hear footsteps, there was at least two people there, walking around, and then the voices came.

'Why would they do this?'

'For fun, I guess. I can't imagine it would be for anything else.'

It was Harry and Hermione, someone ran over to them. 'There's nothing over there.' That was Ron.

Rowena shifted but it wasn't enough. The trio walked and continued to search. Rowena rolled her eyes. She would have to do or say something to get some attention.

'Help...me...'

'Wait,' Hermione breathed. 'Did you hear that?'

'Hear what?' Ron asked impatiently.

'Listen.'

'I'm here... help... me.'

'I heard it that time,' Harry said hastily.

'So did I,' said Ron.

The three of them began to search through the mass of bodies rapidly and it was Hermione that first laid eyes upon Rowena. 'Here!' she yelled. 'Over here!'

Harry and Ron ran over and they both looked down at Rowena. Harry threw his arm into the air. 'Periculum!'

A burst of red sparks flew into the night sky, below the Dark Mark and the rest of the Order was there within seconds. Albus ran over to the trio quickly. 'What did you find?' he asked Harry.

'Rowena,' he said pointing to her on the ground.

Albus' face lit up in shock and he ran to her where Rowena lay. He looked her over. 'Are you alright?'

Rowena shook her head, her face taut with pain, 'No,' she hissed loudly.

'Let's get you to the hospital.'

Albus conjured a stretcher and placed Rowena on top of it and they went to the hospital immediately.

When Rowena woke up the next morning she looked around. She jumped up in shock, almost forgetting what happened last night and almost forgetting where she was now. The hospital room was white and almost bare of furniture, minus the bed and a small, beside table with three draws. Rowena then spotted Albus sitting in the corner of the room, near the door. He smiled and walked over to her and sat beside the bed.

'How are you feeling?'

'Fine,' she replied.

Rowena looked down her body. She had a cast around her leg and her right arm was lying across her chest in a sling, she then winced as her stomach began to hurt. Albus smiled and placed a hand on her shoulder, lying her back down.

'You need to rest. You've been through a lot.'

Rowena nodded but said nothing. 'Do you want to talk about anything?'

Rowena looked at Albus, his blue eyes shining brightly. He looked relieved. Rowena shook her head. 'I'm tired,' she said quietly.

Albus nodded his understanding. 'Of course. You rest. Get some sleep. I'll come and see how you're doing later.'

Rowena nodded faintly and she got herself into a comfortable position and tried to go to sleep. 'I'm happy you're back,' Albus said softly as he walked to the door. He left and Rowena heard a small click behind him. He locked the door. Rowena then sat up again and looked quickly for her wand, wincing every time her ribs hurt. She couldn't find her wand, it wasn't here. Rowena lay back down and closed her eyes and she counted to ten slowly. There was no need to get angry about this. She was sure there was a good explanation.

Back at Grimmauld Place all members of the Order were sitting in the kitchen once again. Every seat was taken, except for the one next to the Tonks. Remus hadn't yet returned for a meeting but Tonks had informed him all about finding Rowena and what had happened. Though tonight's meeting had not started yet.

'He said he wasn't coming,' Tonks said softly.

'Give it another few minutes,' said Albus.

Tonks sighed inaudibly and she looked at Hermione who was chewing on her bottom lip. Tonks' mind wondered for a moment but when Hermione looked at her after she noticed she was being stared at she looked away and looked at the table. Remus had told her that he wasn't going to the meeting but he wouldn't say why.

'Very well,' Albus said slowly. 'I think we should start.'

The kitchen door then opened and Remus walked in. He looked around and his eyes lingered on Hermione a little too long before moving them to his wife and he walked over and sat down next to her. Remus then looked at Albus.

‘Sorry, I’m late.’

‘It’s alright, Remus. We were just about to start,’ said Albus. ‘We need Rowena to tell us what she knows...’

‘Yeah, it’s a shame she’s not talking,’ Sirius said bitingly.

Albus turned his head slightly and gave Sirius a hard look. He didn’t seem to know what to say next. ‘What if she doesn’t talk at all?’ asked Remus quietly.

‘I’m sure she will,’ Albus replied calmly. ‘She’s been through a lot and we can’t expect her to just talk.’

‘Why not?’ Remus asked.

‘Like I said, she has been through a lot and I’m sure there are many things going through her mind right now. I don’t want to push or force her,’ said Albus.

‘Well maybe she needs to be pushed,’ said Remus, his voice rising a little.

‘She will talk when she is ready,’ Albus said firmly.

There was a silent pause. Remus looked at Albus but he said nothing. There was no point in arguing with someone who wasn’t going to listen. Hermione spoke up next.

‘Well, Rowena must know where Voldemort and his followers are.’

‘Perhaps,’ Albus said back. ‘But she will talk when she is ready.’

The meeting ended not long after, a few people just wanted to wait until Rowena actually talked and some, Remus especially, wanted Albus to force Rowena to tell them what she knows.

## Chapter Thirteen - Information

Rowena felt as though the room was getting smaller and smaller. The hospital room was becoming nauseating to look at, it was all white and Rowena sometimes kept her eyes closed a lot of the time. Albus came to visit her once a day which was becoming annoying. He would ask her questions but Rowena didn't answer any of them except to tell him that she was feeling fine.

Right now, it was morning and it has been about a month since she left her father and his followers. Albus has yet to let her leave the hospital and today Rowena's patience had run out. She looked at the clock on her bedside table, it was nearly ten. Albus should be here very soon.

And sure enough, when the clock hit ten o'clock exactly the door to her room opened and Albus walked in. He looked over at her and smiled as he closed the door behind him. He approached her bed and he conjured a chair and sat down. He was wearing long, grey robes which touched the floor and a small, matching wizard's hat. Rowena looked at him. She said nothing.

'How are we today?'

'I'm fine,' Rowena said quietly, now looking away.

'What's wrong?' he asked softly.

'I want to leave this room and this hospital.'

'Why?'

'Because I've been here since I was rescued and I'm sick of it. I'm now healed and healthy. Why can't I leave?' asked Rowena hastily.

'I know you are healthy but you haven't told me anything about what happened?'

'And you need me here to talk?' she asked frowning.



‘No,’ he said calmly. ‘But here the staff can look after you and...’

‘Keep an eye on me, you mean,’ said Rowena, interrupting.

‘Alright, since you are unhappy here, I could take you to Grimmauld Place but you have to stay there,’ Albus said, after a long moment of thought.

‘Why would I have to stay there? I’m of age; I should be allowed to go anywhere I want.’

‘And where would you like to go?’

Rowena went quiet and said nothing. She folded her arms across her chest. She hated Albus for saying that. He got her. She could answer that questions but it would raise too many other ones, ones that she wouldn’t be able to answer. She didn’t want Albus to start doubting her now.

‘That’s what I thought,’ Albus said quietly.

Albus stood up from his chair and waved his wand and the chair disappeared. Still using his wand, he opened the bedside table and packed Rowena’s things inside a small bag which he held onto. ‘Let’s go then.’

Rowena got up off the bed and she left the room with him. Albus spoke briefly to the hospital staff before leading Rowena outside they walked to a small alleyway, where Rowena held onto Albus’ arm and they apparated to Grimmauld Place.

Once inside, they both went upstairs and Albus placed her things in her room. Rowena stood in the doorway, patiently waiting for him to finish and leave. Albus turned to her and looked her over before moving over to her. His blue eyes searched her eyes but Rowena looked away quickly.

‘Look at me,’ Albus said quietly.

Rowena shook her head and she walked away and sat on her bed. Albus walked to the door and put his hand on the door knob but he stopped and looked at Rowena again.

'I do hope you're not hiding anything from me. I do not wish to lose you,' he said quietly.

Rowena looked up at him and she watched him leave. She then felt tears sting the back of her eyes but she held them back. The last thing she's ever wanted was for Albus to be disappointed in her. Since she was little she's wanted Albus to say he was proud of her but she has yet to hear it.

The next morning, Rowena went into the kitchen and she stopped at the door. Many members of the Order were sitting at the table, including Albus. Rowena looked at Remus, who was staring at her almost coldly. Rowena knew he saw her the night of the raid but she only hoped that Remus couldn't be sure of what he saw.

'Rowena, come and sit down with us,' said Albus.

'Why?' Rowena asked slowly.

'We want to have a little talk.'

'I don't want to talk,' Rowena said quietly.

'Come and sit down,' repeated Albus.

Reluctantly, Rowena walked over to the table and she sat down. She made sure not to sit next to anyone else. She looked around the table. Everyone had their eyes on her, except for Remus, who finally looked away in disgust. The look didn't pass Rowena, who noticed immediately.

'Do you have a problem with me?' Rowena asked, almost standing up.

Albus moved quicker than Rowena had ever seen and he placed a hand on her shoulder. Rowena jerked her body away and Albus got the message and he moved his hand. 'Just relax,' he said softly.

Rowena still had her eyes on Remus. 'No, I want to know why you have such a vast problem with me.'

Remus' jaw seemed to tighten. 'Because I saw you the night of the raid, you left with the Death Eaters willingly,' he said loudly, as though he could no longer hold it in.

'I don't know what you're talking about,' Rowena said back.

'No, of course you don't,' said Remus heatedly.

'Stop it, both of you. This won't help anyone,' Albus said firmly.

The room went quiet and then, Rowena remembered what he wanted from Albus. 'I know you have my wand,' she said quietly. 'I want it back.'

'Of course,' said Albus. 'I was going to give it to you at the hospital but you wouldn't need it there.'

'Have it checked did you?' she asked venomously.

'I do not understand what you mean,' Albus said sitting down.

'To see what spells and charms I've been using, to see what I've been up to,' she said, her eyes narrowing.

'Rowena,' Albus said clearly. 'I do trust you. You're not anyone's enemy here.'

'Then why is everyone hostile to me, why do people stare?' she questioned angrily.

'Well, you haven't been much nicer to anyone else,' Sirius said looking at her.

‘Piss off, would you,’ Rowena shouted.

She stood up and she went back upstairs and rushed down the hallway and out the front door. She walked up Grimmauld Place and she felt herself get upset again. A tear left her eyes but she wiped it away instantly. They weren't worth getting upset over and she knew that. She had more important things to work on but she knew it would have to wait.

No-one in the Order trusted her and she needed to have that trust back before she did anything. Otherwise she could be followed her questioned every time she left the house alone. She wanted Albus, especially, to trust her. If she could fully get his trust back, she would be alright. When she reached the end of the street, Rowena stopped and decided not to go any further.

She sat down on the edge of the sidewalk and she took a few deep breaths. She wanted to clear her head and get rid of her anger before going back to headquarters. She couldn't do this right now. She knew she had to pretend but she didn't think it was going to be this hard. She had expected Albus to believe her and give her more time but it wasn't happening like she thought it would.

Rowena knew she had had a lot of time to think all of this through but in truth she had done nothing. She needed to think of something to tell Albus and the Order. She knew she couldn't tell them where her father and his followers were but she had to tell them something, otherwise they wouldn't trust her. She had thought about telling them who some of the Death Eaters were, but it occurred to her that they have met some or most already, it wouldn't do them any good.

Rowena waited until sunset before going back to headquarters. When entering the house she went into the living-room. Sirius was in there alone, lying across one of the sofas, with his feet resting on arm rest and his back support by a couple of pillows. His head snapped to the side as Rowena entered the room. Rowena felt a little sheepish as she looked over at him.

‘I'm sorry... for what I said to you,’ she said quietly.

‘It’s alright,’ Sirius said back. ‘Albus isn’t here, well, no-one else is here. It’s just me.’

‘Where did everyone go?’ she asked moving to sit on one of the sofas.

‘Some people went home, others back to work, and Harry and the others just went out for a drink, I think,’ he said.

‘Why didn’t you go?’ asked Rowena.

Sirius shrugged. ‘Not really in the mood.’

Rowena wasn’t sure she believed him. ‘Really? Or are you just saying that?’

For a split second, Sirius looked confused about what Rowena just said. ‘No, I was really not in the mood. Albus didn’t ask me to stay and watch you. I think after the meeting he thought he’d give you some space.’

‘Do you know where Albus went?’

‘Back to Hogwarts, I’d imagine.’ Sirius saw Rowena’s face fall a little. ‘He’ll be back in a few days.’

Rowena nodded. Sirius smiled at her faintly, before going back to reading his magazine. Rowena wondered whether she should stay here or go back to her room. She stayed there for a moment though and studied Sirius. Rowena thought him to be quite interesting. He survived Azkaban for twelve years, became the first person ever to escape and he remained in hiding so years.

Rowena knew he was now a free man but he didn’t go out very much. Rowena wondered if Sirius had gotten used to be in confined spaces, maybe it just became normal after a long period of time. She looked him over slowly. His black hair almost reached his elbows, though it didn’t appear matted anymore and his face was once gaunt looking, was now a little more filled, though Rowena could still tell that Azkaban had left a permanent mark.

Sirius turned to look at Rowena again and he smiled faintly. 'Are you alright?'

'Yeah,' Rowena said quickly. She had been staring. She felt a flush of heat creep to her cheeks, so she decided to move on. 'Do you hate me?' she asked.

Sirius was still looking at her. He frowned and looked around the room. 'Since when did you care what people thought about you?'

'I don't normally, but I can't help but notice how much people seem to hate me and I was just wondering if that included you?'

Sirius sat up properly on the sofa and he dropped the magazine he was reading beside him and he rested his hands on the sofa, either side of him. He looked at seriously. 'No, I don't hate you but I will admit that you seem to be making things difficult.'

'What do you mean?' Rowena asked innocently.

Sirius smiled. He saw right through that and Rowena knew it but she showed nothing. 'You know exactly what I'm talking about. I know Albus cares about you and he, along with the rest of the Order, would like to know what happen to you while you were with Voldemort. I'm sure there are many things you could tell us.'

'I'm sure there are things I could tell you,' Rowena agreed quietly. 'But it's not time yet.'

'Why?' asked Sirius, frowning. 'What are you waiting for?'

Rowena shrugged. 'I'm not sure.'

When Rowena thought it over, she really wasn't sure why she wasn't saying anything. She then thought of Remus and the way he looked at her.

'Why does Remus hate me then?' she asked.

'Why are you asking me?'

‘Because you’re one of his best friends, you would know him better than anyone else in the Order,’ said Rowena.

Sirius lay down on the sofa again, picking up his magazine. He chuckled slightly. ‘I do know Remus, but this might be better coming from him.’

‘I do not agree,’ said Rowena.

‘Alright then, Remus thinks you have unofficially joined your father and his followers,’ Sirius said quickly.

‘Why does he think that?’ she asked next.

‘He saw you on the night of the raid and you were holding your wand and you still left with a Death Eater,’ said Sirius clearly. ‘He thinks that you could have gotten away if you wanted to.’

‘I have my reasons for not doing so.’

Sirius nodded but he said nothing. He went back to reading his magazine and Rowena lent her back against the sofa she was sitting on. She took her eyes off Sirius and looked at the other side of the room. There wasn’t much to see though.

After a little while longer, Rowena went back up to her room. Nothing more was said between her and Sirius. Rowena locked the bedroom door and sat on the edge of her bed. She thought about what Sirius had told her about how Remus felt. It was true, she probably could have fought Walden off, but what for? She had a plan, as did her father.

At this moment, Rowena knew that any trust Remus may have had in her was now gone and she knew it wasn’t about to return at any point. Now, she had to make sure not to make everyone feel the same about her.

A few nights later Rowena joined the Order in the kitchen for their next meeting. She decided to listen to Sirius and tell them what she

could, though Rowena knew she could tell them so much that would probably help them but she couldn't tell them everything, it would ruin everything.

She sat at the table next to Albus and the other sit next to her remained empty. Albus had started the meeting and he eventually got to the part everyone was waiting for, getting some information from Rowena.

'Ok,' Albus said turning his body so he could look at Rowena comfortably. 'Now, Sirius tells me you're ready to talk.'

Rowena nodded. 'I'm not sure what to say though,' she said hesitantly.

'That's Ok, we can ask the questions,' Albus said softly. 'Make it a little easier on you. Now, what can you tell me about the location that Voldemort is in?' Albus asked.

'I don't know,' said Rowena, shrugging. 'Um, I don't know where they are but it was a big place. I was never allowed outside, except when I was on the raid.'

'Speaking of which, why were you on the raid?' Remus asked.

'Because my father tortured me until I agree to go with them,' she replied. 'I eventually agreed because I knew he wouldn't stop until I agreed. But while on the raid, I didn't hurt anyone.'

'I believe you,' said Albus softly.

Rowena was glad he believed her, because that was the truth. She didn't hurt anyone on the raid; she just went along with them to see what they did on one.

'Do you know what Voldemort has planned?' Harry asked.

Rowena looked at Harry. His black hair was messy and his bright green eyes were looking at Rowena uncertainly. 'No,' she replied. 'I was told nothing.'



‘Why didn’t he kill you when you first met?’ asked Moody.

Rowena turned her head to look at Moody, who was the only person in the room not sitting at the table. He was standing near the door, leaning on his walking stick. His normal eye was on sitting on Rowena, while his blue magical eye kept an eye on everything else. Rowena found him to be one of the only people here who was quite intimidating.

‘I asked him the same question,’ said Rowena. ‘And he told me that he wanted to get to know me and see how alike we are.’

‘And what did he find out?’ Albus asked.

Rowena shrugged. ‘I don’t know. I never asked and he never told me on his own.’

‘Has anyone else been captured there?’ asked Kingsley.

Rowena nodded. ‘Yes. They captured someone named Hannah Abbott. Father mentioned something her mother as well, but I never asked what he meant by it. Also, my father received some new followers while I was there and one of them was unwilling to join and he was kept in a cell. He’s name was... Blaise Zabini.’

‘Did you have any interaction with them?’ asked Kingsley.

‘Yes, only once,’ Rowena said softly. She knew she just lied. ‘My father wanted Blaise to join and told him that it was either that or he dies and he kept refusing to join and one night he told me to kill Blaise.’

‘And?’ asked Remus, who was now leaning on the table.

‘I didn’t and I don’t know what happened to Blaise afterwards,’ Rowena said heatedly.

Albus put a hand her shoulder but this time Rowena didn't move when he did. 'Just relax, Rowena. And Remus, stop angering her, it's not helping anyone.'

Remus' jaw hardened but he said nothing more. He looked away and Rowena watched as Tonks took his hand and he moved his away. She raised an eyebrow but she said nothing. She wondered how long they had been fighting for and she contemplated on if it would end. They both had a son to think about. He was only a year old.

'Does he have a plan now?' asked Remus.

'What do you mean?' Rowena asked frowning.

'Well, the Death Eaters left you at Caldwell, and I will admit that you were injured but I'm sure it's nothing that couldn't have been planned....'

'Remus,' Sirius said warningly.

'...and if that's what happened then, you might have a plan for being here now,' Remus finished, as though Sirius hadn't interrupted.

'I'm not listening to anymore of this,' Rowena said stiffly.

She got up from her chair and she left the kitchen. Albus sighed heavily and he looked to Remus. 'Remus, I know you don't trust Rowena, but I do. She has been through a lot in the last few months and I don't want people making it worse for her then it needs to be.'

The meeting ended there and Remus stood up and left the kitchen as well as the house. Tonks kept her eyes on the door after he had left but she didn't go after him. Tonks couldn't get through to Remus and she still didn't know why Remus was so angry. All Tonks wanted to know was why he was so agitated all the time and she couldn't believe that it was all about Rowena, there had to be more to it.

Rowena returned to her room and she looked around. This was boring her. She was now wishing she had never agreed to come back here. She could no longer understand why her father wanted her to

return here. What good would it do? Nobody except Albus trusted her anymore. Rowena fell back against the bed. This wasn't going to go well.

## Chapter Fourteen – Unexpected Circumstances

The beginning of December started slowly. Rowena knew she would be turning nineteen on the twenty-first and she wasn't sure how to feel about it. It only felt like yesterday that she was in Godric's Hollow at the Dumbledore estate, talking to Albus about her last year of school. But things were now different, everything had changed.

She was still at Grimmauld Place and she was still bored here. There was nothing to do here and Rowena knew people talked about her when she wasn't around. She caught Harry and his friends talking about her again, though she didn't stay much longer to hear what was said. Also, she only saw Albus once more since he returned to Hogwarts. There still wasn't much said between them and he kept warning her not to leave the house, though this time, he concluded that he couldn't stop her if she wanted to leave. She promised to take Sirius with her if she left.

Right now it was late afternoon and the only people at Grimmauld Place were Sirius, Harry, Ron and Hermione. Remus was at home with Teddy while Tonks went back to work with Kingsley. Rowena guessed that Moody went home. Bill and Fleur went back to Shell Cottage and Molly and Arthur returned to the Burrow and Ginny had returned to Hogwarts for her last year.

Hermione and Ron were still dating but Rowena thought their relationship seems to have lost its spark. Rowena couldn't understand why. Maybe it was the war. Even Tonks and Remus' relationship has gone downhill and Rowena didn't know why that one had either. Rowena also questioned if Harry and Ginny were still together since Harry had only been on a couple of dates since Ginny went back to school.

As Rowena lost herself in her thoughts, her owl Helios flew through her bedroom window and landed on the bed next to her. She sat up and looked Helios over before taking the letter within his beak. At first she thought it was from Albus because the handwriting was similar but then she noticed the difference in the letter 'w'. It was from Aberforth.

Rowena frowned faintly but she opened the letter and read it slowly.

Dear Rowena,

I was wondering if you would like to come and visit me. I haven't seen you in a while. Congratulations on graduating. We'll have a drink and celebrate. If you can come, come to the Hogs Head at around nine tomorrow night.'

Aberforth.

Rowena re-read the letter again. She was sure that Aberforth had heard about her mother's death. He was interested in asking her about it, not about celebrating her graduating. She was going to go and see him anyway. She knew Aberforth wouldn't tell Albus anything until he knew everything.

The next night, Rowena informed Sirius that she was going to Hogsmeade to visit Aberforth. Sirius frowned at her, as though he didn't believe her but he accepted it.

She left the house at eight that night and she disappeared with a small pop. When she arrived at her destination she immediately knew that she missed her target spot but she wasn't too far away from Hogsmeade so she decided to walk to the rest of the way. There was no point in trying to disapparate again.

It took about forty minutes to reach Hogsmeade, Rowena didn't mind, but she was a little out of breath. She reached the Hog's Head and she knocked on the front door but nothing happened. She touched the knob and turned it. It wasn't locked. She pushed the door open and it creaked the whole way.

Instantly, Rowena thought something had happened. The inside was dusty and a little dark; there wasn't much light coming into the pub. Rowena thought it was a little too quiet but she walked in and closed the door behind her, locking it. She stayed put and looked around. Nothing appeared broken or out of place.

She moved slowly and began to walk up the stairs. Every stair she stepped on creak and it made Rowena hold her breath. She stopped and placed her back against the wall as a noise behind her got louder and reached her. A goat walked past the bottom of the stairs. Rowena swore under her breath and continued upstairs.

She opened the door to the sitting room and she poked her head in. 'Hello?' she called out.

She then yelped as she was grabbed and pulled into the room. She turned when she was released and she saw it was just Aberforth, though Rowena knew he was angry. His blue eyes looked like fire almost.

'What the hell....?' said Rowena angrily.

'I told you not to do anything stupid,' Aberforth said back just as angry.

'I don't know what you're talking about,' she said slowly.

'Don't play stupid now; you're too intelligent for that. I gave you your mother's address because I thought you just wanted to meet her.'

'I did just meet her,' said Rowena.

'Stop lying. You might be able to fool her own father, and other members of the Order and I'm so amazed that Albus hasn't found out himself, though personally I think he's in denial but don't think I am going to believe your lies.'

'I did not kill my mother,' said Rowena, calmly.

'You're lying,' said Aberforth.

Rowena said nothing. She wasn't going to try and convince him, it wasn't worth it. He was never going to believe her. Aberforth looked her over again before turning his back to her and walking away. He walked over to a small cabinet and took out some elf-made wine. He poured two glasses and handed one to Rowena.

Rowena frowned inwardly and she sniffed the contents before placing it on the small coffee table in the room. She wasn't interested in drinking it. He could have poured anything into it. Aberforth noticed but he didn't say anything.

'What do you plan to do?' asked Rowena, after a long stretch of silence.

'I don't know,' Aberforth breathed. 'Why?'

'Well, you obviously don't believe me, so I'm guessing you'll do something about it.'

'Like what?' he asked.

'Tell Albus,' Rowena replied honestly.

'I thought about doing that,' said Aberforth. 'But it seems you have Albus fooled too.'

'Do you really think I could fool him?' asked Rowena looking at Aberforth. 'Albus is one of the most powerful wizards of the modern era...'

'Tell me about it,' said Aberforth, bitterly.

'I don't think many people could fool him, if any,' she finished.

'Then how did your mother die?'

'I do not know,' said Rowena. 'Albus told me she was murdered but they don't know by whom and I'm not sure if I care too much.'

'And why would that be?'

Rowena turned to face the door as did Aberforth; Albus was standing the doorway, his blue eyes fixed upon Rowena, who now looked like she had just seen a ghost. She had turned much whiter than normal and she suddenly didn't feel so brave and confident.

Rowena looked at Aberforth who was shaking his head. 'I told Albus you were coming over but I didn't say why.'

'You trapped me,' she whispered.

'If that's how you want to see it,' said Albus. There was another pause. 'Why don't you care who murdered your mother.'

'Because I never got to meet her,' said Rowena.

'You're lying,' said Albus. 'You went to meet her. My brother gave you her work address.'

'Ok, ok, I went to see my mother,' Rowena said loudly. She knew she had been caught but it didn't mean she had to admit everything.

'I went to the pub and I met my mother. I kept telling you that I wanted to meet her. She's my mother and I have every right to know her. She told me she was pregnant and getting married and I will admit that I didn't like that because she gave me up. I had a fight with her and I left. I didn't want to do anything I would regret that,' said Rowena quickly.

There was a short pause. 'I just regret that I can no longer apologise and get to know her properly.'

Rowena knew she had to bring out something bigger than her anger. With a lot of effort, she made herself cry. A few tears flowed down her cheeks and she wiped on her robe sleeve when they reached her chin. She sniffed and walked over to Albus.

'I just wanted to talk with her but she had no interest in me.'

Albus' expression softened and he hugged Rowena, who hugged him back lightly. When he released her, he stroked her wet cheek with one long finger.

'I'm sorry, Rowena,' said Albus softly. 'Maybe you should have had the opportunity to meet Isabelle properly but I already knew that she



wasn't interested in knowing you and I wanted to spare you hurtful feelings.'

Albus hugged her again and he stayed for a little while longer before going back up to the school. Aberforth just laughed after Albus left. Rowena looked at him and frowned heavily.

'You've got him wrapped around your little finger, haven't you?'

'I don't know what you're talking about,' said Rowena quietly.

'Yes, you do.'

Rowena couldn't help but smile faintly but she admitted nothing.

'I don't think I've ever seen him manipulated as much by anyone than he is by you, well, maybe except Grindelwald.'

That made Rowena's head snap to attention. She had heard that name before. 'I know that name,' she said quietly, trying to remember.

'He was a dark wizard. He attended Durmstrang, I think, I told you about him,' said Aberforth.

It clicked, she had heard the name before, well, she read the name. His name is carved in an outside wall in the Durmstrang grounds. She saw it once when she went for a walk. She past it many times, but only once, she actually read it. She wasn't sure who he was and she asked her History of Magic teacher and he informed her that Grindelwald attended Durmstrang but was expelled in his sixth year.

'What has he got to do with anything?'

'Albus and Grindelwald became friends before their "famous" duel,' said Aberforth bitterly.

'B-But... how... I don't understand,' Rowena said quickly.

'Well, you know how I told you my sister was killed and that Grindelwald was involved. After it all happened Grindelwald fled the country and I never saw him again but Albus faced him in a duel.'

'Did Albus kill him?' asked Rowena quickly, her eyes widening.

Aberforth chuckled lightly. 'No, he didn't kill Grindelwald. He sent the scumbag to his own prison. I'm not sure if he's still alive though.'

'He had a prison?'

'Yeah, he built it for his enemies, it's ironic he ended up there himself,' Aberforth said, looking at the portrait of Ariana.

The room went quiet as Rowena thought through things in her own mind. At the moment, she wasn't sure about what else to say, if there was anything else. After another long period, Aberforth broke the silence.

'I think he loves you though,' he said quietly.

'What?' asked Rowena, scowled faintly.

'Albus,' he said lightly. 'He loves you. Otherwise I'm sure he would see right through you, even if you could perform Occlumency perfectly.'

'How did you know I could do it?'

'Albus mentioned it when I spoke to him last,' he replied. 'I think if you were anyone else you would have been caught by now.'

'Anyone else?' Rowena asked, still frowning.

'You're Voldemort's daughter,' he said calmly. 'Albus watched Voldemort grow up, he saw all the signs and Albus raised you, don't forget. He sees you as his own daughter.'

‘He’s never said anything,’ said Rowena quietly. ‘I’ve never thought he loved me at all. I know he cares about me but I thought that was it.’

‘He doesn’t want to see you become your father.’

Rowena said nothing more, ending the conversation there. What she told Aberforth was the truth; it was how she really felt. She loved Albus she had never told him. She found it hard to even have those feelings, let alone talk about them.

Rowena stayed with Aberforth for a little while longer before returning to Grimmauld Place. Her heart had not yet stopped beating rapidly. Having Albus come in and scare her wasn't very nice. It surprised her. She didn't expect Albus to appear and she couldn't believe that Aberforth told Albus about her coming over. It made her start to wonder if Albus did suspect her, if only slightly.

Rowena then stopped as she saw a shadow move near her. She followed it and she found herself in the living room. The only person there was Harry. Rowena eyed him nervously. He meant for her to see him, well, his shadow anyway. They had never spoken alone before and Rowena was sure why. Her father was after Harry.

‘My father’s enemy standing right in front of me, how ironic,’ commented Rowena quietly.

‘It’s not ironic,’ said Harry. ‘It’s absurd. It’s strange that Voldemort should even have a child. Do you really have a mother?’

‘Of course I do, Potter,’ said Rowena. ‘You should know that by now. I wasn't born out of thin air.’

‘Can you speak to snakes?’

‘Yes ... though I've heard you can also ... is that right?’ she asked slowly, her eyes narrowing in curiosity.

‘Yes,’ said Harry, his tone almost defensive. ‘But only because of Voldemort.’

Rowena walked a few steps, still keeping her eyes on Harry. He didn't move but continued watching her, his eyes following her movements. 'I am aware of some people's opinions on me but what are yours?'

Harry half shrugged. 'I honestly don't know,' he said. 'Part of me thinks you have joined Voldemort but then I question on why you're here but then I think it could be a trick, you're only here to make sure people think you were tortured and scarred but...'

Harry trailed off, his voice breaking with silence. He no longer knew what to think. 'I saw you at the raid with Macnair. You did seem to leave with him. I know you said you were forced but why did they let you keep your wand?'

'Because father knows I wouldn't have been able to win,' said Rowena gently. 'Everyone there is more experienced than me. I do not think I could beat any of them, let alone one. Now, I am choosing to end this tedious conversation. Goodnight, Potter.'

She turned her back to him and left the room. She heard him whisper as she left. 'Goodnight.'

Rowena left the living room and began walking up the stairs. She knew everyone had gone to bed. She continued up the stairs noiselessly and as she walked past Ron and Hermione's room but she stopped and went back to the door, she thought she had heard something. She looked both ways down the hallway but no one was there.

She stepped closer to the door and she listened. There was a faint moaning sound within the room but it ended quickly and then came a loud thud. Rowena took her wand out of her robe and she tapped the door very lightly so she could hear better.

'...but come on, Hermione,' said Ron irritably.

'I said no,' said Hermione, firmly.

'Why bother teasing me then,' he said angrily.

'Teasing you? I wasn't teasing you; I thought we were just kissing.'

'I'm horny and quite hard and I know you're aware of that fact, don't do this.'

It went quiet and Rowena could only just picture what was happening in there. She guessed that Ron was trying to force Hermione, though Rowena would never have thought it.

There was another thud. 'I said no, Ron. I don't want to.'

'Why?'

'I'm just not in the mood for sex right now.'

'But why?'

'I don't know. Is it that important?' she asked shrilly.

'Yes, I think so,' said Ron loudly.

'Well, I'm sorry I don't share that view,' said Hermione softly.

Ron said nothing but there came a loud shuffling noise. 'Ouch!' Hermione said loudly. 'I said no, Ron, get away from me.'

'Would you be saying no still if I was Remus?' asked Ron angrily.

'I don't know what you're talking about,' said Hermione.

'Don't play dumb, Hermione, it doesn't suit you,' Ron said angrily. 'I've noticed all the little looks between you and Remus.'

'You're being stupid,' Hermione said softly.

'Am I?' he asked quietly.

Something else was said but Rowena didn't quite catch it, it was extremely quiet. Then Rowena jumped as a loud slapping sound came from the room, and then another thud and Hermione whimpered and sobbed. Rowena hated it; she knew what must have happened.

Still holding her wand, she blasted the door open and she saw Ron standing over Hermione, who was still sobbing loudly, while begging him to stop. Rowena knew Ron was about to strike her again.

'Stupefy,' Rowena shouted.

The red flame of the spell engulfed Ron and then blasted him to the other side of the room. He hit the wall and then slumped to the floor. Rowena rushed to Hermione and she bent down on the floor.

'Are you alright?' she asked quickly.

Hermione sniffed and wiped under one of her eyes while she nodded. 'Yeah,' she said almost breathlessly. 'I'm alright now.'

More footsteps appeared behind Rowena, at the door and someone gasped. Rowena turned, it was Remus and Sirius.

'What the hell...?' Sirius started.

Remus took out his wand and he pointed it at Rowena. 'Step away,' he said tightly.

Hermione got to her feet and stood in front of Rowena. 'Stop,' she said looking at Remus. 'Rowena helped me.'

Both Remus and Sirius frowned. 'I don't understand,' said Remus.

'Ron hit Hermione and I stopped him from doing it again,' said Rowena calmly.

'He hit you?' Remus asked, astounded.

Hermione nodded. She didn't appear to want to talk about it. 'Just get him out of here.'

Rowena waved her wand and it lifted the spell from Ron, who began to come around immediately. He saw everyone in the room and his eyes narrowed at Rowena before quickly looking over at Hermione, who was now in Remus' arms. He stroked her hair gently, comforting her.

Ron tried to go for them but Sirius grabbed him and took him from the room. Rowena followed and she turned once more, enough time to see Remus kiss Hermione on the cheek and it made them both stop. Hermione held her breath and it was like time stopped. Rowena felt guilt for staying there.

She walked down the hallway and too the front door. She saw Sirius push Ron out of the house. 'I think you should leave and not come back until Hermione's ready to see you.'

Sirius then closed the front door again and locked it, putting an extra charm upon it. Sirius turned to Rowena, as he saw her he smiled but Rowena didn't return it. She looked back at the door.

'You did a good thing,' said Sirius.

'It doesn't feel like it.'

'Why?'

'Because if I hadn't been so nosy, I wouldn't have heard any of it.'

'You were listening to them on purpose?' Sirius asked, frowning faintly.

'Yes,' Rowena admitted. 'I heard some noises and I listened, I'm sure not why though and....' she trailed off.

'I think it's a good thing you did, but don't make a habit of it,' Sirius said smiling again.

'I won't,' she said truthfully.

A few days later, Rowena left Grimmauld Place again. She decided to go back to her old school to see some of her old teachers. She knew she had told her father that there was no one she could recruit but maybe there was. She was going to talk to Sevnik first, well, technically second because she had to see the headmaster first.

She apparated to the school grounds and walked through the gate after tapping it with her wand and she walked down the small path to the entrance. She opened the entrance door and made her way to the headmaster's office. She walked past a few classrooms and she heard some lessons going on. When she heard the noise, it made a part of her feel sad. She sometimes wished she were still here.

She knocked on the headmaster's office door and she heard him telling her to enter. Dobtcheff was sitting at his desk and when the door opened he looked up. He looked at Rowena in surprise but his face quickly turned to content. He smiled at her and stood up from his chair. He walked to her and shook hands with her.

'Miss Riddle, what brings you back here?' he asked.

Rowena smiled back mechanically and looked up into his bright silver eyes, they glowed faintly. 'Hello, headmaster, I was hoping to see Professor Sevnik.'

'Miss her already?' Dobtcheff asked with another wide smile.

'Something like that,' said Rowena quietly.

'She's in her classroom teaching. The lesson will be over soon,' he said. 'But first, tell me, how is Albus going?'

'He is well,' Rowena replied. 'He's still quite protective though.'

'Well, most parents or guardians usually are,' said Dobtcheff. 'You should be very privileged to have been taken in by Albus, he's a good man. I never pictured him raising a child but I think he did a good job.'



Rowena just nodded at his words. She was wondering if he meant that she should be lucky that anyone would take her in, considering whom she is. But she knew a Muggle family could have taken her, but who would know if they would have been open and accepting of magic. But if any other wizarding family did take her, then they would probably have to know about her real father, which would be off putting to most people.

‘So, how is everything going here?’ asked Rowena, after a small period of quiet.

‘Quite good considering,’ he replied. ‘Baransti’s death shook a lot of people. I, myself, still can’t believe what happened but I guess sometimes these things happen.’

Rowena nodded. ‘Yes, I’m sure it cannot be easy to lose a teacher and friend.’ Rowena’s tone was polite but fake. She was the one who killed Baransti and if given the opportunity she would do it again. He deserved to die, and she would never think otherwise.

The conversation went on between them for a little bit longer before Rowena said a polite good-bye and went to see Sevnik. She entered the Dark Arts classroom but it was empty. She then made her way to the office and she knocked on the door. Sevnik answered it quickly and she seemed quite startled to see Rowena standing there.

‘Miss Riddle!’ she exclaimed. ‘Whatever are you doing here?’

‘I’ve come to see you,’ said Rowena calmly.

‘Oh,’ she breathed. ‘Well, come in, come in,’ she said quickly.

Rowena bowed her head very slightly before walking past and entering her office. Sevnik closed the door behind her and she walked to her desk and sat down.

‘So, have you come to see me about anything in particular?’

‘Perhaps...’

She trailed off and she walked around Sevnik's office. She was just looking around. She looked over some dark and weird looking objects but she didn't touch any of them.

'How have you been?' asked Rowena. She was just making conversation.

'Quite good,' Sevnik replied.

'And how are Professors Gauk and Yudina going?'

'I don't know what you mean,' said Sevnik.

Rowena looked at her old Dark Arts professor and she walked over to the desk and sat down in the empty chair. Her old teacher showed no signs of any surprise or embarrassment.

'You do know what I mean,' said Rowena softly. 'The night I asked you to teach me Occlumency, you told me to leave and come back in a few hours and it didn't quite happen like that.'

'What do you mean?' asked Sevnik, her voice tensing.

Rowena smiled softly. 'You looked to be shaken, well, astonished to see me, I felt like I had interrupted something. I waited around one of the corners and when it became dark, I saw Professor Gauk and Yudina leave your classroom.'

'We weren't hiding anything,' Sevnik said defensively.

Rowena leaned back in her chair slightly. 'Really?' she asked cocking an eyebrow. 'That's not what it looked like to me.'

'Then you saw it wrong,' said Sevnik, stiffly.

'Oh, I don't think so,' Rowena said back.

The room went silent and Rowena kept her eyes on Sevnik. There was something wrong with her. She seemed edgy.

'Is something wrong?' asked Rowena, after a long silent stretch.

'No,' Sevnik said stiffly. 'I've been thinking about something lately.'

'And what would that be?'

'You know what happened to Baransti, don't you?' she asked quietly.

'Of course I don't know what happened. I wasn't there and I don't know how he died. It was an accident, I'm sure,' she said softly. 'Since when did you start doubting your favourite former student?'

'I wasn't the only person that noticed the tension between you and Baransti, you could have sliced it with a blunt knife,' said Sevnik.

'It doesn't mean I killed him.'

Sevnik nodded her head slowly and watched her former student. 'So, why are you back here?'

Rowena took out her wand and she placed a silencing charm around the room. 'I need some people.'

Sevnik frowned heavily. 'I don't understand....'

'Then listen up,' said Rowena with authority. 'You were my favourite teacher while I was here and I'm hoping you'll help me now.'

'With...'

'Listen,' Rowena said quickly, cutting Sevnik's sentence short. Sevnik seemed quite shocked by Rowena's sudden change in tone.

Rowena took a deep, steady breath. 'I have met my father,' she started. 'And he is looking for new followers and the other night, I thought of you.' Rowena paused and she was happy that Sevnik didn't interrupt. 'And I'm hoping you will join my father. He is a powerful man.'

'What if I refuse?' Sevnik asked slowly.

Rowena shrugged. 'I don't know,' she said honestly. 'I thought you might've wanted another challenge, beyond teaching.'

'I don't think I'd consider murdering and torturing people for the fun of it a challenge,' she bit back.

'There's more to it,' said Rowena. She really wasn't sure if there was more to it, but she had to convince someone to join and this was the best bet. 'I'm sure you could experiment, do things you've always wanted to do and with my father you'd be able to it, freely.'

Sevnik went quiet and Rowena instantly knew that she had hit a right cord with her former teacher. Sevnik looked Rowena over carefully a few times before standing up and breathing slowly. Sevnik appeared quite shaken. Rowena felt her mouth twitch in anticipation.

Sevnik exhaled slowly. She was greatly considering the possibilities of what she could do. Sevnik walked over to the window and looked out over the expansive grounds of Durmstrang and her thoughts lingered over her students. She eventually turned back to Rowena, who was still watching her and Sevnik exhaled again.

'I can't,' she said clearly. 'I ... just can't.'

Rowena nodded slowly and looked away. She stood up and walked to the door but turned to look at Sevnik once again. Sevnik appeared shaky, nervous and scared. It was the first time Rowena had seen anything close to fear in Sevnik's eyes and it angered Rowena, but she could never hurt her old favourite teacher. This woman had faced vampires, werewolves, hags, and all things that made Rowena look up to her but now it had been wiped away with one decision.

Rowena placed her wand back inside her robes and Sevnik appeared relieved. Rowena shook her head to herself and left the room and the school and returned to England.

## Chapter Fifteen – Caught

Rowena returned to England but she didn't remain there for long. She decided to pay her old friend in Australia a visit. Deep down she knew William wouldn't join her but a small guilty part of her wanted to visit him. She had heard nothing and was curious to know what he was now up to. She decided to use a Portkey. She made her way to a secluded area and started her search for something insignificant.

After a little while of searching, she found a rusted, gold photo frame lying on the ground. Before picking it up, she looked around and she inspected it closely. She poked the object with her wand and whispered, 'Portus.'

The object glowed blue and then began to tremble for a few seconds before returning to normal. She had timed it to leave in a few minutes. She needed to think for a moment. She knew nothing about Australia but she might be able to find another wizard or witch quickly. It wasn't hard to find magic if you were looking for it in a Muggle place.

A minute went by and Rowena started to wonder if this was a good idea. She had never been to Australia and she wasn't even sure if the Portkey would take her to a secluded place or not. Anyway, she wasn't even sure what part of the country William lived. She then thought that maybe she should have done more research on it.

After another couple of minutes, the object shook and glowed faintly again and then Rowena felt herself being pulled at the navel. Her world spun around and it turned into blackness for a moment before the world came back into colour.

Rowena opened her eyes. She was lying on grass and she couldn't see anyone or hear anyone. She slowly sat up and looked around. She didn't know where she was. She could've been anywhere right now. Rowena lifted herself to her feet and brushed her robes off. She frowned and took her wand out of her pocket. She closed her eyes and concentrated on going to a town or village.

She felt herself disappeared, but something was wrong. There was something tugging on the back of her robe. But it was too late to turn

back and she went through the magic and darkness of it. When she arrived at a destination, she looked behind her and she felt anger boil through her.

Walden Macnair was standing there, smiling at her. Rowena rounded on him. 'What the hell are you doing here?'

'I followed you,' he said simply.

'I can see that,' said Rowena angrily. 'But I'm asking why you are here.'

'Your father wanted you followed. He thought there was a chance that you would leave the country.'

'But I was just in Bulgaria, I had already left the country,' she said.

'I know, I was there too,' he said back.

'I don't believe it...' she muttered under her breath. 'Why are you following me?'

'I told you, your father told me too.'

'Yes, but why? Why did he want me followed?'

Walden continued to smile and he half shrugged. 'He wanted to know where you were going and the only way I could follow you now was to grab you.'

'But....' She struggled for words for a moment. 'But how... you've been following me the whole time?'

He just nodded. 'Damn it!' she yelled. 'He doesn't trust me!'

Rowena's anger boiled over again and it got the better of her. She was still holding her wand and she slashed it, cutting Walden across the chest. He cried out in pain and blood splattered in all directions. He fell onto the ground and held his wound, trying to stop the gushing flow of blood. He was now unable to reach his wand.

Rowena stifled a sob and her vision was blurry from her tears. She wiped her eyes hastily before kneeling beside Walden and healing him with her wand, though the wound still didn't look great.

'Come on, let's find somewhere to stay and get this fixed,' she said.

She helped Walden to his feet and Rowena was surprised he was still able to walk almost by himself. He seemed quite strong. They walked into the Muggle city and Rowena found a small, motel quickly. She booked a room and she quickly laid Walden on one of the beds. The receptionist had looked at them in alarm but Rowena assured her that they were fine. Now, she just hoped that the Muggle woman would not question it.

The next morning, Rowena and Walden were still at the Muggle motel. He was still recovering, while Rowena watched out the window. She couldn't believe what had happened. She now needed to speak with her father. She wanted to know why he doesn't trust her, after everything she had done or had tried to do.

Rowena looked over at the bed, Walden was asleep. She wondered how he could sleep at such a time. When the sun was half-way up the sky, Rowena ordered some breakfast sent the room and she poked Walden with her wand, she wasn't prepared to touch him. She immediately moved away when Walden began to stir. She had moved an armchair into a corner and she sat down and watched Walden.

He groaned heavily before sitting up. He looked around and his eyes found Rowena after they had adjusted. He squinted and rubbed his face tiredly. Rowena sat stiffly in her chair, unmoving while she watched him still. Walden coughed and sat up more. He looked over at Rowena again.

'What are you planning to do now?'

Rowena lifted her shoulder slowly into a shrug. 'I need to find William.'

‘Who is William?’ asked Walden, a trace of jealousy and protectiveness in his voice.

‘A boy I went to Durmstrang with,’ replied Rowena, not caring for his tone. ‘He lives here, in Australia.’

‘Why would he travel all that way just to go to school? There must be a wizarding school here?’ asked Walden, frowning.

‘There is,’ said Rowena uninterestedly. ‘He liked me though I never reciprocated his feelings and I’m wondering if he would consider joining my father.’

‘I thought you said there was no one you could ask to join?’

‘I didn’t think there was,’ said Rowena honestly. ‘But after some thought I went to ask my old Dark Arts teacher and though she was tempted, she refused, but I know she won’t say anything and then I thought of William. Maybe I’m hoping his feelings are there and then maybe I could use them to my advantage.’

‘And how do you plan on finding him?’

‘He’s father works at the Ministry,’ said Rowena. ‘And that’s where I plan on going.’

‘And do you know how to get there?’ asked Walden, his face lightening a little.

‘No, but I’m sure it won’t be too hard.’

Walden snorted. ‘You have your father’s arrogance.’

‘Alright, do you know where to go then?’ asked Rowena darkly.

‘As a matter of fact, I do.’

‘How?’ asked Rowena, outraged.



'I used to work for the Ministry in England,' said Walden. 'All Ministries' keep tabs on each other, helps them to communicate and the like.'

'Why hasn't my father just taken over the Ministry?' asked Rowena, a sudden thought coming to mind. There were things she wanted to know and she thought it might as well be now.

'Because Dumbledore is still around,' he said. 'It's always been said that the only person your father has ever feared is Dumbledore, why, I am not sure.'

'Why do you tell me these things?' asked Rowena. 'Not many people answer my questions properly, not even my father or Albus.'

'I just think you deserve to know, most of us know many things too but we don't normally say anything around the Dark Lord or other Death Eaters.'

'Why?'

'Fear of punishment, I would think,' he said. He looked away from Rowena and turned to the window. A person walked by and not long afterwards there was a knock on the door. Rowena stood up and walked to the door; she opened it slightly and peered through. It was a woman. She was holding a medium sized silver tray and she smiled nervously at Rowena.

'I have your breakfast.'

Rowena opened the door widely and she took the tray with a small thanks. The woman smiled still and left. Rowena closed the door and she placed the tray in front of Walden. He looked at it quickly before looking at Rowena.

'Aren't you eating?'

Rowena walked back to her armchair in the corner and sat down. She shook her head. 'No, I'm not hungry,' she said softly.

'I don't believe that.'

Rowena said nothing. She watched as Walden stood up from the bed and he took one piece of buttered toast and she offered it to Rowena. Moments passed, she still had not taken it.

'Take it,' he said gently. 'You need to eat something.'

Rowena knew he wasn't going to leave it, so she took it and bit a small piece of the corner. Walden smiled and he walked back to his bed and began to eat. Half-way through her toast Rowena thought of something.

'What was the last battle and what happened?'

'It was at Hogwarts... don't you know about it?'

'No,' said Rowena. 'I don't remember hearing anything about a battle at Hogwarts. When was it?'

'It happened... it would have been the end of your sixth year,' said Walden, thinking quickly. 'The battle happened quickly. People were hurt.'

Rowena frowned and looked elsewhere. Why hadn't Albus told her about it? 'I remember hearing about my father going to school but that was in my seventh year.'

'Yeah, we were there then too,' said Walden.

'So what happened in the battle?' asked Rowena.

'Well,' he started. 'We ambushed the school, thanks to Draco and like I said the battle started quickly.'

'Was anyone injured or killed?'

'Yeah,' he replied. 'We didn't lose anyone but the Order lost a woman called Hestia Jones, and we killed a student... it was... Marietta

something, I can't remember her name. Bella killed her, I think. Also Bill Weasley was injured the battle. Greyback attacked him.'

'That's why his face was like that...' Rowena said under her breath but Walden heard her and he nodded.

The room turned silent and they both finished eating in silence. When finished Walden placed the tray aside and Rowena dusted the crumbs off her hands. She stood up and placed her robe around her before placing her wand inside the pocket. Walden watched her.

'I thought you wouldn't let it out of your site.'

'Well, I'm pretty sure you're not going to attack me, am I correct?' she asked.

'Yes,' he said clearly.

'I thought so. I think we should go now,' she said looking out the window. There were only a few cars in the parking lot but there were no people around. Rowena was sure that they were fine.

'Does the Order know where you are?' asked Walden, as he got ready.

'No, well, they know I went to visit Aberforth, but apart from that, no,' she replied.

'Good.'

When they were both ready Rowena looked at Walden. 'So, you know where to go?'

He just nodded and they left the motel together, Rowena paying the bill on the way out. They then walked down a busy Muggle street, looking for a secluded place to disappear. Rowena stood close to Walden, as he led the way. She wondered if he had been here before but she didn't ask. There would be time for more questions and answers later when she returned to her father.

After half an hour of walking they came to a small back street and they both glanced around to make sure no Muggles were watching. Walden had his wand out and Rowena reluctantly took his arm and she disappeared with him.

They arrived in another part of the country and Rowena looked around them again. 'Where are we?' she asked.

'In Sydney,' he replied. 'The Australian Ministry is located near the suburb of Liverpool. It's not a big place but you'll notice the magical place when we get there. Just a quick five minute walk.'

They walked quickly and reached the main part of the small suburb. Rowena was surprised that so many people were in the same place, at the same time. It was one of the busiest places she had seen. She wasn't expecting any Muggle place that had a magical place concealed would be this crowded, but then she wondered if it was because of the crowds, it was here. Maybe it helped to conceal it, to protect it. Rowena nudged Walden quickly. She couldn't help but notice how many people were staring at them. They were dressed quite differently to everyone else.

But it changed when Rowena spotted another person wearing Muggle clothes, though it looked unusual. Rowena watched the person and watched where they were walking to. Rowena grabbed Walden's robe and she pulled him with her before quickly letting go. They followed the person and they saw him enter what appeared to be a church, but Rowena didn't think that it really was church, from what she could see it was a run-down building in need of some serious repairs. They entered the building together and the inside shocked Rowena, and Walden as well.

The inside was not the inside of a church at all. It had led them to another place. There was a street on the other side, but back there it seemed to be nothing, just a brick wall. 'Is this what we were looking for?' she asked quietly.

'Yes,' Walden replied. 'This is the place. The Ministry is located at the very end of this street.'

'How do you know that?' asked Rowena.

'I told you before all Ministries know where the other is plus I asked Rookwood to find out about this place, he told me quite a bit.'

Rowena nodded but she said nothing more. They just continued to walk down the new street. They no longer received stranger's stares, everyone walked past as though everything were normal. Rowena looked at the shops as they passed. There was a Potion shop, a pet store, a robe shop, a Quidditch shop, along with a large bank, which took up a large part on one side of the street. When they reached the end of the street they both stopped momentarily and looked up at the building which stood tall, and proud in front of them.

It was large, with many windows on the front, though Rowena could see no-one inside of them. 'Let's just go inside,' said Rowena, in an irritated tone.

Walden seemed to bow slightly and he walked inside first, Rowena followed, apparently he knew where to go. The very first room they entered was the atrium. Rowena didn't think it was anything special to look at. It seemed just like a normal room, except there was a large fountain on the back wall, with a mural behind it, depicting magical beings and creatures. Rowena wondered if the one in England looked like this. She had never been to a Ministry though, she wasn't even sure where the one in Bulgaria was, she had never asked about it.

They walked straight past the reception desk and made their way to the elevator in the main corridor. Walden pushed the button for the third floor and they waited. A few more people joined them. Rowena felt almost nervous, as though they were about to get caught for something but she knew that the idea was silly. No-one in this country knew about them, Rowena even doubted that some people knew about her father. This country was on the other side of the world.

When they arrived on the third floor, they left the elevator, along with a couple other people. 'Down this way,' said Walden, pointing down the corridor to the left. Rowena just nodded and she again followed him.

Some way down the corridor Walden stopped. She looked at him and waited for him to say something. 'You should find William in the office at the back; you may run into others there too. I'll wait out here for you.'

Rowena nodded before entering the through the door, which led her to a row of offices on each side. All of them appeared small, some even looked cramped. She continued walking through them and she only stopped when a man stood in front her, blocking her path. Rowena heard a rustle behind her and she knew it was Walden. She held her hand out at her side, telling him to stay where he was.

The noise disappeared and the man in front of her continued to look at her. His eyes were narrowed and his face white and taut with stress. 'Who are you?' he asked gruffly.

'My name is Rowena Riddle,' she said politely. 'I'm looking for William Jenson.'

'And why would that be?' the man asked.

'He is a friend. We attended Durmstrang together,' said Rowena.

The man nodded and turned so his back was to her and he began to walk towards the back office. She guessed that he was taking her to where William was. The man opened an office door and he pointed inside before walking away. Rowena wondered if this man was always like this or if it was just all the stress he was under.

Rowena looked inside the office and she immediately found William. He was sitting behind a desk but his back was to the door. He appeared to be looking through many files. Rowena stood there for a moment and watched. She couldn't help but smile faintly. After a few more minutes William let out a loud, irritated sigh.

Rowena chuckled. 'Stressful day?'

William shot up and looked around in surprise. He let out another sigh when he saw it was just Rowena. He still seemed surprised. 'What are you doing here?' he asked in alarm.

'I decided to come and visit you,' she said softly.

'Why though?' he asked.

'Do I need a reason?'

'Well, I can't imagine you would come all this way just to see me.'

Rowena then wondered if William was thinking about the times she rejected him. If she had known about his feelings earlier than she would have said something. Rowena entered the office and she closed and locked the door before walking over to chair opposite William and she sat down. She sighed softly and looked at him.

'You're right. I did come here for something else,' she said quietly.

'I knew it,' William breathed before going back to his work.

She decided to change the subject. 'Is that big man out there your father?'

'Yes,' said William.

'He seems like a lovely guy,' said Rowena.

William turned to look at her, Rowena just smiled still. He shook his head and went back to his files. 'Are you getting paid to do this?'

'Yes,' he repeated.

'Do you enjoy it?' she asked.

'What the hell do you think?' he asked angrily. The anger passed momentarily. 'Sorry,' he whispered.

'Nothing to be sorry for,' she said back. 'Why do you do this job if you don't like it?'

'Have to support my family somehow,' he said under his breath but Rowena heard him.

'Did I hear you right, your family?'

'Yes, my family. Alisa and I are still together. We got married a few months after leaving school and she's three months pregnant,' William said hastily.

Rowena thought it was one of the most shocking things that she had heard since leaving school. 'You married her?' Rowena asked.

'Yes,' said William.

'Do you love her?'

'Yes,' William repeated.

The conversation died for a little while. Rowena thought it time she just came out and said it. 'Would you leave this job, if you could?'

'My father would be disappointed, besides, Alisa and I have nowhere else to go.'

'What if I said you could come with me?' said Rowena quietly.

'With you? Where?' he asked quickly.

'To England,' she replied.

'Why would we want to go there?' he asked, now looking at Rowena. He stopped what he was doing and turned in his chair.

Rowena smiled faintly and placed her hands across her stomach. 'Well, I met my father not long ago and I'm sure he would be more than happy for you to join.'

'Why would I want to join a Dark Lord?' he asked. Rowena thought he sounded angry again, or he was getting there quickly.



'Well, technically, you'll be joining me, not my father. I'm sure I could talk to him and you won't be alone there. Alisa could come.'

'How do I know we'll be safe?'

'You don't,' said Rowena. 'You'll just have to trust me.'

William appeared more than unsure. Rowena sighed and got up from her chair. 'I suggest not saying anything to anyone, though you live here,' said Rowena slowly, thinking of her options. 'If you ever do change your mind, you know how to contact me.'

She went to the door and opened it and left without another word to William, who was still looking after Rowena with his mouth opened wide. He suddenly appeared lost and confused.

Rowena went back out into the corridor, where Walden was still waiting for her. 'Where is he?' he asked looking around.

'He will not go,' said Rowena. 'Though I sense he may yet change his mind.' She began walking away, back down the corridor.

'And where are you going?' asked Walden, frowning faintly.

'I have to return to the Order.'

'But why?'

'Well, you can tell him that you found, me followed me and that I have returned to the Order and tell me I won't be much longer.'

'Why don't you come back with me now?' asked Walden.

'Because I've already been missing for a while and I'm sure Albus might have noticed already,' said Rowena. 'He needs to know I'm alright.'

'What will you say to him?'

'I'm not sure,' said Rowena honestly. 'Just tell my father I will return.'

‘Alright, but if I get in trouble for this...’

‘You can blame me and I will explain when I return,’ she said, cutting in.

Walden nodded and he left the Ministry. Rowena left not long after him.

By the next night, Rowena had arrived back at Grimmauld Place and at this moment she was standing just outside the gate to the house. She was nervous. Someone must have noticed that she had been gone for a while. Would Albus or anyone suspect something? All she could hope was that no-one thought she ran off to do something bad.

She took her wand out of her robes and tapped it on the gate, it opened, but not without a large creaking sound. Rowena frowned as she looked at it. She waited for a moment before moving. She didn’t remember the gate doing that before. She tilted her head but moved through up to the stairs and then tapping the door with her wand. Several clicks made its way down the door and then it seemed to open of its own accord.

Rowena continued to frown faintly but she decided to keep going. The inside of the house seemed darker than usual and she could hear no noise from anywhere. She closed the door behind her and held her wand at the ready. She couldn’t shake the feeling that something bad had happened or was about to happen.

‘Expelliarmus!’ shouted a figure who suddenly stepped in the front hall from the darkness. Rowena yelped. It was Remus. He disarmed her and he caught her wand easily. Rowena looked up at him but before she could say anything, she was grabbed from behind.

She struggled before feeling her arms being pulled behind her back. She yelped again and tried to free herself. What the hell was going on here?

‘Come on, let’s go, you have some explaining to do,’ a hoarse voice said in her ear. She recognised the voice as Alastor Moody.

She was then pushed down the hallway and taken downstairs in the kitchen. All of the Order was there, standing around the walls, the table in the room was gone. In the middle of everyone, Albus stood. He had the same grim appearance as others in the room.

Alastor pushed her into the room to stand opposite Albus, his grip on her tightened as she continued to struggle but she instantly stopped when she looked at Albus. His face was impassive. Rowena hated when he looked that way, she knew it wasn't going to be good for her.

## Chapter Sixteen: Flashback

A large sigh echoed the small space of the kitchen as Rowena continued to wait. She looked the fireplace over as she waited for her guardian to join her. The fireplace wasn't too large but it was big enough for someone to travel through when necessary. The bottom was laid with coal and Rowena could smell the odours of it from where she stood.

When the kitchen door opened her eyes shot to it and watched as Albus walked through, a smile clearly present on his face. Rowena gave him a questioning look but she remained silent, knowing that he was going to inform her of his thoughts anyway.

'I do believe you will enjoy Diagon Alley,' he declared happily. He approached the fireplace, taking his wand out and creating a small fire within the grate. He soon grabbed the Floo powder and threw a handful in. Rowena watched in awe as the fire turned into tall, green flames. Rowena internally questioned the reason why they didn't just apparate there but she kept it to herself.

'Alright, let's go,' he said next, gesturing for Rowena to go through first.

Rowena continued to remain silent and she went stepped into the green flames. She felt herself spin rapidly before landing safely on the other side and within seconds Albus joined her. Rowena stepped away from him and looked around. She was in an enormous room that stretched on for miles. She could see many similar terminals surrounding her with people appearing at certain intervals.

'We are in the Ministry of Magic,' Albus informed her. 'Follow me. We shall go to the bookstore first, I think,' he added thoughtfully.

Rowena nodded but still said nothing. As they left the Ministry they walked down a Muggle street in London. Rowena threw Albus a questioning look but she remained silent. He probably knew where he was going. When they reached an old looking pub, Albus opened the door, letting Rowena walk in first. She glanced around and followed Albus through.

'Good afternoon, Tom,' Albus called to the barman, who grinned and waved in return.

'Evening, Headmaster, come in for a refresher?'

'No, not tonight,' Albus said politely. 'Just helping a student find all her school things.'

They waved goodbye and both Rowena and Albus stepped outside into a small back alley of the pub. There was nothing in front of them but a brick wall. Rowena frowned at it before looking up at Albus, who took hold of his wand once more. He tapped the bricks three up and two across before placing his wand back in his pocket.

Rowena's frown remained but her facial expression quickly turned to surprise as the brick wall seemed to melt away into an archway, revealing a long street behind it. Rowena stepped through with Albus following and her eyes widened in astonishment. The street was longer than she had imagined and it was full of witches and wizards going about their normal day.

Shops lined the street and Rowena tried to look at all of them at once. There were shops selling robes, shops selling telescopes and strange silver instruments that she had never seen before. There were windows stacked with barrels of animal parts, staggering piles of spell book, quills, rolls of parchment and potion bottles.

The first shop they went into was Flourish and Blotts and Rowena knew immediately that it was a book store, though compared to a couple others this one seemed organised and well looked after. Rowena stepped to the side and followed Albus as he walked around the shop, evidently knowing where he was going and what he was doing.

As they walked up a flight of stairs a book title caught Rowena's attention; Blood Brothers. Rowena frowned and continued to stare at it until they reached the top floor. It was smaller than the bottom but it still contained many books.

There were a few people here, looking and reading through the books and many of them seemed to know who Albus was. Rowena stayed behind him, largely out of sight, not wanting to gain any attention from the people he knew.

Out of all the people on the second floor, only one of them fully gained Rowena's attention. It had looked like several men instead of one. Albus' face lit up and his eyes twinkled as they approached.

'Why, hello Hagrid,' he said smiling.

The giant bulk of the man turned and Rowena looked him up. He was much taller than anyone she had ever met before. She knew he couldn't be a giant, but half one, perhaps. The giant's warm black eyes lit up and the smile was clearly noticeable through his large, scruffy beard.

'Ah, Headmaster!' he said happily. 'What brings you here?'

Albus stepped to the side, showing Hagrid the young lady he had with him. 'This is my ward, Rowena,' Albus told him. 'She will be starting school this year, at Durmstrang but I just thought we could get her books together.' Albus turned to look at Rowena. 'This is Rubeus Hagrid. He is the gamekeeper at Hogwarts.'

'Nice to meet you,' Hagrid said, giving Rowena a smile.

She half-heartedly returned it. 'Likewise,' Rowena said in a small polite tone.

Rowena stepped away from both of them and she let them talk. She glanced through the books, slowly moving further and further away from Albus. When looking through the books no longer held any interest Rowena leaned against the railing and looked down. Before long she glanced up and looked out the window.

There were still many people in the street, walking past the large windows at the front of the shop. Rowena watched as many of them as possible. One of the people though somehow instantly caught Rowena's eye. A boy around her own age was walking past, looking

up at the shop signs in awe, his eyes wide behind round frames. Rowena quickly felt that something wasn't right here. She could have sworn the face belonged to Harry Potter...

'Are you ready to leave?' Albus asked firmly, aware of what had caught Rowena's rapt attention.

'Yes,' Rowena whispered, without taking her eyes off the boy. Once he had disappeared Rowena turned to look at Albus. The normal happy look was replaced with something close to concern.

Rowena quickly glanced away and followed him from the shop. Rowena silently glanced up and down the street, wondering if the boy was still here but she could see no sign of him. Part of her was disappointed but the other part felt glad in the knowledge that she had probably been mistaken.

Rowena turned to Albus and took a step closer to him. People that passed them stared. 'Can we leave soon?' she asked quietly, feeling uncomfortable from the stares.

Albus noticed her awkwardness from being in public for too long with him. He nodded gently, his tone of voice pleasant. 'Of course,' he said quietly so only she could hear. 'Just a couple more things and I shall take you straight home.'

Rowena nodded at his words and walked closely behind or beside him until the day was at an end. Rowena didn't relax until they reached home and she breathed deeply, panting slightly, as though she had been holding her breath for too long.

## Chapter Seventeen – Slytherin's Last Descendant

The room was silent. No one had yet spoken. Albus continued to look at Rowena and she stared back, though she kept the pressure on her mind. She could feel Albus trying to break through. Finally, Rowena looked away and her eyes found the floor.

‘What are you hiding?’ asked Albus.

‘Nothing,’ Rowena said quickly.

‘You're lying,’ he said quietly.

Rowena hopelessly shook her head as she continued to direct her eyes on the floor. She feared that she was about to be caught and they would throw her in Azkaban and force her to tell them everything she knew. She didn't want that to happen but she was not yet able to show a memory that wasn't exactly true. She had tried to practice but it was a hard thing to do.

Rowena screamed as Alastor pushed a hand into the middle of her back. Rowena knew she had to make something happen now. She hung her head low and squeezed her eyes to make more tears come out, though the pain in her back helped.

She then looked up after sniffing a few times and she looked Albus in the eyes. ‘Please, Albus,’ she begged. ‘Please...’

Just then a great sadness filled Albus' eyes as he continued to look at his former ward. ‘Release her,’ he whispered.

A few Order members looked around at each other and Alastor had not yet moved. ‘Release her,’ he said louder.

This time, Alastor did just that. He let her go and Rowena left the room and she fled to her bedroom. She could talk to Albus about everything later. The mood in the kitchen worsened.

‘Your love for her blinds you,’ said Remus softly.



People then turned their heads to look at Remus. Albus said nothing, he waited for Remus to continue, which didn't take long.

'You're letting your personal feelings about her get in the way; you can't see what she's really like. She can manipulate you just by crying, like she did just then. She put on some fake tears and begged you like a child and you caved in,' he said, his voice growing louder with each word.

'Her tears didn't look fake to me,' said Ron. He was looking at Remus with hatred through narrow eyes. Hermione was standing beside Remus and she tried her hardest not to notice anything. Ron had been allowed back inside the house only after a few days. Hermione decided it was wrong for her to be selfish about this.

Albus cut in before Remus could respond to Ron's comment. 'I do care about Rowena deeply. I do not think that makes any difference here, but I'm sure she has thoughts and feelings that most people never have. And I'm sure she has a good reason for leaving like she did. I shall talk to her later, alone.'

When Rowena reached her bedroom, she slammed the door shut and she paced the room angrily. The Order had taken her by surprise. It was the last thing she expected. They attacked her, they had already blamed her, and they had already thought the worst without talking to her about it first. Rowena was angry but she started to think she was angrier with herself, she had let this happen. She should have gone to see her father first.

Later that night, there came a knock at the bedroom door. Rowena said nothing but the door opened and Albus walked in. He started to approach Rowena but she moved away. Albus sighed softly before walking to her bed and sitting down. He looked at her and there was much silence between them. Rowena had moved to the wall opposite the bed and she leaned against it. She didn't really feel like talking right now.

'So, would you like to tell me why you left, without telling anyone?' asked Albus.

Rowena folded her arms across her chest and she looked at Albus, while keeping the wall in her mind up. She shrugged lightly. 'I don't know. I just... I... I needed to get away from here. I felt like I was smothered and there were always many people around. I just wanted to get away.'

'You could have spoken to me about how you were feeling,' said Albus gently.

'As if you would listen,' Rowena mumbled, but Albus still heard her.

'You know I care about you,' said Albus gently.

'No, I don't. You've never said it before. How am I supposed to know?' she asked louder than she probably should have.

'Because I took you in when you were young, and I raised you.'

'But you weren't always there,' said Rowena quietly.

Albus went quiet for a moment as he looked at Rowena. He seemed unable to break through to her. She wasn't interested in talking to him and she wasn't interested in talking about anything. She was angry.

'I know I could have been there more but you had Aberforth around and besides, I had to look after Hogwarts-'

'Harry Potter, you mean,' Rowena said bitterly.

Albus seemed surprised by that small outburst. 'What do you mean?'

'You know what I mean,' said Rowena loudly. 'You were obsessed with Harry Potter, it was always Harry this and Harry that when I was little. I heard you talk about him; I even heard you muttered his name under your breath. I always felt like I had to live up to Harry Potter, that you'd be disappointed if I didn't turn out like him.'

'I think we're getting a bit off track here...' Albus started slowly.

'Oh yes, because every time the conversation get close to home, you change the subject,' said Rowena heatedly.

'Rowena,' Albus said warningly.

Albus waited for things to calm down between them. Rowena breathed deeply. She was still highly annoyed and irritated. All she wanted now was for Albus to go and leave her alone but she knew he wanted answers but she wasn't sure what to say.

'Now,' said Albus. 'I think you should tell me where you went.'

'I didn't go anywhere in particular.'

'Rowena,' Albus said steadily. 'You need to tell the truth.'

'What makes you think I'm lying?' asked Rowena angrily.

'I know you're lying?'

'How?' asked Rowena quietly.

'I know you,' Albus replied. 'I know what you're like and I know what you're capable of. I also knew what your father was like and I'm sure you have some of his traits.'

Rowena's eyes narrowed. 'That doesn't tell me how you know I'm lying.'

'So are you admitting that you are lying?'

'No,' said Rowena lightly. 'I just want to know why you think I am lying.'

Albus sighed. 'You were followed.'

'What?' Rowena said quickly, looking at Albus with wide eyes. It wasn't what she expected him to say. 'When was I followed?'

‘When you were in Bulgaria. We sent people to find you but after you left Bulgaria they lost you but you found again in Australia,’ Albus said quietly. ‘Why were you in Bulgaria?’

‘To see my former Dark Arts teacher,’ Rowena replied.

‘And why was that?’

‘I just wanted to see her. She was the person who taught me Occlumency. I liked her and I got along with her.’

‘Alright, then why to Australia?’ Albus asked next.

‘I went to William Jenson,’ she replied.

‘Who is William Jenson?’ asked Albus.

‘A friend. We went to school together,’ she said quietly.

‘But why seek all of these people out just now? Why not earlier?’ asked Albus, leaning forwards, still keeping his eyes on Rowena, who shrugged again.

‘I don’t know,’ she said quietly. ‘I just wanted to see them and catch up.’

‘About what? Joining your father, or them joining you?’

That sentence shocked Rowena to the core. The tone of Albus’ voice was unmistakable. He knew. He knew what she was doing. She couldn’t believe it. Albus knew what she and her father had planned. He had her followed. Rowena mentally kicked herself. She didn’t remember seeing anyone that she remembered or recognised. Her eyes had widened in surprise but Rowena tried to hide it but was unsuccessful. Albus saw right through her.

‘I think you’re going to stay here for a while,’ he said gravely. ‘I think Remus was right about you.’

Rowena moved her arms and placed them by her side. She wasn't about to tell him anything but she also knew it was just about over for her. She was stuck here. She wouldn't be able to return to her father. It was over. Albus and the others would now eventually find out what she did to her charms teacher and her mother. Rowena pushed herself off the wall and approached Albus, who stood up.

Half-way towards him, Rowena noticed Albus was holding his wand, though it was by his side. She looked at it in shock before looking in Albus' usually bright, blue eyes.

'Is that necessary?' she asked in a very soft voice. 'I don't have my wand on me. I would never hurt you.'

Albus nodded his head very gently. Rowena wasn't sure that he believed her. 'I wished I could believe you now and I wish to again one day but I'm afraid that you may have stretched my trust too far.'

Rowena wept quietly. 'But-'

'No buts this time,' said Albus softly. 'I will give you time to think about everything and when you're ready to talk, I shall return.'

'But-'

Rowena stopped her sentence as Albus turned his back to her and left the room, leaving Rowena feeling shocked. She slumped down the wall and landed heavily on the floor. She wasn't sure how to feel at this very moment. It almost felt as though that conversation just never happened. She looked at her bedroom door, which was now closed. She couldn't believe what had just happened.

She hadn't seen it coming. She thought she could fool Albus for a lot longer. Rowena never thought he would suspect her after everything she had currently gotten away with. She knew she had to turn it around, get Albus to trust her again but it wouldn't be an easy thing to do.

Rowena continued to stare at the door. A singular tear rolled down her cheek. For the first time, this one was real.

On Rowena's nineteenth birthday she kept herself holed up in her room. She only left it to use the bathroom. She still didn't have her wand and she hadn't yet seen Albus again. At all times of the day Rowena kept looking at the window, hoping that Albus would send her something for her birthday but nothing came. When the sun had disappeared, she stopped waiting.

She lay down on her bed and stared at the ceiling. More minutes ticked by and Rowena sighed heavily. She had now been here for a few weeks and she was extremely bored. She always heard people coming and going and Rowena wished she could do the same. The only person who spoke to her at all was Sirius. He would sometimes tell her if she was hungry or if she needed anything.

There was then a knock at the door. Rowena sat up in alarm. Her heart was pounding. She hadn't expected that to happen. She had instinctively reached for her wand before she remembered that she no longer had it. There was another knock at the door. Rowena looked at it again. She was just worried about who was on the other side.

'Yes?'

'Um... It's Hermione,' came a soft voice.

'Oh,' Rowena whispered in surprise. 'Come in,' she said louder to the door.

It opened slowly and Hermione poked her head around it before opening it further and walking in, the gently closing the door behind her. Rowena immediately looked down slightly. Hermione was holding a package. Hermione walked over slowly. 'Can I sit down?' she asked, indicating to the bed.

Rowena nodded silently. Hermione smiled faintly and she sat down on the bed, near Rowena. She then held out the package to her. Rowena didn't move. She just stared between it and Hermione eyes.

'Happy birthday,' said Hermione quietly.

'It's from you?' Rowena asked slowly.

Hermione nodded. 'I found out it was your birthday and I got you something.'

'Will it explode?'

Hermione chuckled politely. 'No, it won't do anything like that,' she said. 'I promise,' she added quickly.

Rowena slowly reached out and took the package and opened it just as slow. It was a book, Secrets of the Darkest Arts. Rowena then wondered if she knew about what had happened and was having some fun but Rowena didn't think Hermione was that type of person. Rowena looked the book over again before looking up at Hermione.

'Thank you.'

Hermione then beamed. 'I wasn't sure what you'd like, so I thought a book might be a safe option.'

'How did you find out it was my birthday anyway?' asked Rowena.

Hermione looked away for a moment. 'Sirius mentioned it and asked if anything was being done for your birthday and... I'm sure you know what was said.'

Rowena nodded. She knew that nothing was going to happen for her birthday, though she hadn't expected anything but she had to admit that she had a tiny, little hope that Albus would come and see her or just send her a letter. She was also surprised that she had heard nothing from Aberforth. She was amazed at how disappointed she felt by that. After all those thoughts went through her head, Rowena just wanted to change the subject.

'So, are you still with Ron or....?' asked Rowena unsurely. She felt a little bad about asking. She was the person who interrupted them during a fight. She had seen both of them since but she hadn't heard

what happened. Hermione no longer sat with Ron during Order meetings.

‘No, I ended it with Ron a while ago,’ Hermione said quietly.

‘I’m sorry,’ said Rowena. ‘I know it was none of my business.’

Hermione shrugged as she smiled. ‘It’s Ok. I’m sure I wouldn’t have said anything to anyone about it and in a way I’m glad that you heard us.’

Rowena listened but then she had another personal question. ‘So, is anything happening with Remus, then?’

‘What do you mean?’ asked Hermione.

Rowena knew that tone of voice. Hermione didn’t want to admit to anything. ‘Remus and I are just friends and besides, he’s married.’

‘What if he wasn’t?’ asked Rowena, frowning lightly.

‘Can we change the subject?’

Rowena nodded, ‘Of course.’ She attempted to think of something else, but it was Hermione who thought of it first.

‘What about you?’ she asked almost excitedly. ‘Is there any love interest?’

‘No,’ said Rowena, shaking her head, ‘nothing at the moment.’

‘Is there a reason?’ asked Hermione.

The room went quiet. Rowena wasn’t sure she was very comfortable talking about herself. ‘No, there really hasn’t been anyone. I’m not interested in having someone right now, though I’m not sure if I will ever be ready.’

‘Why?’



Rowena felt surprised. Hermione's head had tilted and she was looking at Rowena as though she were strange. She had a slight frown on her face and Rowena shrugged faintly. 'I'm not sure,' she said honestly. 'I don't trust people easily. I think that's the reason why.'

Hermione nodded. She opened her mouth to say more but the door to Rowena's bedroom opened again and it was Harry who poked his head through. He looked at the scene before him but he said nothing of it.

'Hermione, Remus needs to see you downstairs.'

Harry's head disappeared from sight quickly and Hermione smiled at Rowena almost apologetically. Rowena nodded her head, indicating that it was Ok. Hermione got up and walked to the door. Before she left Rowena said, 'Thanks again for the present. It was very thoughtful.'

Hermione turned and beamed a smile at Rowena again before leaving quietly and shutting the door behind her. Rowena picked the book up and turned it over, reading the back and then looking at the front again. She did mean what she said. It was very thoughtful of Hermione to get her something, even after what had happened but Rowena knew Hermione was a good and nice person. Rowena realised that not even her coldness and almost betrayal had changed that.

When the beginning of January began, Rowena was beginning to feel worse. She was still at Grimmauld Place and she still hadn't heard from Albus. She was bored before but now it felt worse. She never went outside and she still only left her room to use the bathroom, Sirius was still bringing her food a couple times again.

But one night, Rowena became so bored; she left her room, not to go to the bathroom but to find out who was at headquarters right now. She walked to the railing and looked over. She couldn't see anyone. She ventured downstairs and in the living-room she found Hermione and Sirius chatting. They both went quiet as soon as she entered the room. They both seemed very surprised to see her.

'Is something wrong?' asked Sirius, who sounded slightly alarmed. Rowena couldn't help but wonder if it was because she's come downstairs for the first time since returning.

'No, I'm fine,' she said quietly, looking between them. 'Are you the only two here?'

They both nodded but it was Sirius that spoke. 'Yes, it's just us. The others went out...'

'Where?' asked Rowena stepping forwards.

Sirius and Hermione both looked at each other, apparently neither of them knew what to say. From their looks and their silence Rowena figured out that it had something to do with her father and his followers but she wanted to hear one of them say it to her.

Sirius opened his mouth, hesitated, closed it and then opened it again and spoke. 'We heard a rumour about the Death Eaters being in London and most members went to check it out.'

'And why are you two here?'

'Well, Hermione's not feeling too well and I said I'd stay with her.'

'And?' Rowena said quickly.

'And,' Sirius started. 'Albus wants at least two people to be here at all times with you.'

Rowena nodded and she walked to an empty armchair in the corner and sat down. 'Is it Ok that I join you?' she asked, suddenly unsure about her actions.

Sirius nodded and smiled faintly. 'Of course you can.'

She leaned back in her chair and sighed. Her dark brown hair spilled around her shoulders and Rowena rolled her eyes before moving her hair out of the way. After a long time of silence, Rowena decided if

she was going to join them then she might as well make a conversation with them.

‘Do you know who has my wand?’

Sirius nodded. ‘Yes, I have it.’

‘Why?’ asked Rowena, frowning.

‘Like I told you, there are always at least two people here when you are and the elder of the two people keeps your wand on them,’ he explained. ‘Your wand doesn’t leave this house, Dumbledore’s rules.’

‘What if I steal it back?’ asked Rowena, her frowning lifting.

‘I don’t think that would be an easy thing to do,’ said Hermione, piping up.

Silently, Rowena agreed with Hermione. It wouldn’t be an easy thing to do. ‘Has Albus been around at all?’

‘A few times,’ replied Sirius.

‘Has he asked about me?’ asked Rowena quietly.

Sirius shook his head without saying anything, he didn’t have to. Rowena didn’t expect anything, she had just hoped.

Hermione cleared her throat and shifted on the sofa. ‘So, why didn’t you come to Hogwarts? You could have learnt about your family history and your ancestors.’

Rowena couldn’t help but frown in confusion. ‘What are you talking about?’

‘You don’t know?’ asked Hermione hesitantly.

Rowena just looked at Hermione and shook her head. She then looked to Sirius then back to Hermione who seemed staggered. ‘You’re a descendant of Salazar Slytherin and the last if your father

dies before you,' Hermione said excitedly. 'He was one of four wizards who founded Hogwarts. He was quite a powerful wizard.'

'Who are the other three?' asked Rowena slowly. She couldn't believe what she just heard.

'Well, the other wizard was Godric Gryffindor, and there were two witches, Helga Hufflepuff and Rowena-'

'Ravenclaw,' said Rowena, finishing Hermione's sentence.

Hermione seemed even more amazed. 'Yes, h-how did you know that?'

'Albus said he named me after Rowena Ravenclaw, he told that she was one person to found Hogwarts.'

'Do you have a middle name?' asked Sirius.

Rowena looked at him. Did it really matter? She thought the question was silly but she answered him anyway. 'Yes, my middle name is Merope. It was my grandmother's name.'

They both nodded at the end of her answer. 'So, tell me about my ancestors,' said Rowena gently.

'Um...' Hermione hesitated.

Sirius held and hand up and sat up straight. 'I'm sure I could fill you in. All of my family was in Slytherin at Hogwarts, well, except for me of course,' he said almost bitterly.

There was a slight pause.

'Anyway,' Sirius continued. 'Salazar Slytherin was sly and cunning, not unlike many of the students in his house today. He believed strongly that only wizards of pure blood, you know, those with a mother and father from Wizarding families, should be allowed to attend Hogwarts. Slytherin caused great dispute over this with the other founders, and it eventually caused a permanent rift with

Gryffindor, which led to Slytherin's departure from the school. Before he left, however, he created the Chamber of Secrets, complete with a huge statue of himself and a horrible monster.'

Hermione was staring at Sirius with her mouth slightly open. Sirius turned to her. 'What?'

Hermione shook her head and looked away. However, Rowena had questions. 'What is the Chamber of Secrets?' she asked.

'A chamber,' Sirius replied.

Rowena half-rolled her eyes at him. 'So, it was for his secret use or... what?'

Hermione then spoke up again. 'We believe that he built it for his future heir.'

'Which was?'

'Your father,' Sirius said looking at her.

'Right,' she said inaudibly. 'So, if I went there, I would be able to open it?'

'Yes,' Hermione replied.

Rowena nodded and looked away. She looked at her lap and she pressed her hands together. She wasn't sure where to take the conversation next. After a while, Hermione got up and she said a quiet, quick good-night and she left for bed. Now only Sirius and Rowena remained in the living-room.

Rowena kept looking him over. Sirius noticed and smiled at her. Rowena felt a slight heat in her cheeks and she looked away. She looked the room over and took everything in. 'I think you want me,' said Sirius. He was smirking.

'I'll be honest,' said Rowena calmly. 'If I were interested in you, even if I could in the slightest, I probably would jump you.'

Sirius chuckled and Rowena couldn't help but smile. 'I like your phrasing of that.'

'Thank you,' said Rowena quietly.

After a little while, Rowena went upstairs. She felt tired and all she wanted was to sleep. As Rowena lay down in bed, there came a knock at her bedroom door. Rowena sighed heavily in annoyance and she got back up and went to the door. She opened it slightly and she saw Sirius standing there, smiling at her and she noticed he was holding something. A wand. Her wand. And he was holding it out to her.

Rowena frowned. 'What are you doing?'

Sirius shrugged and inclined his head to the side and kept on smiling. 'Well, I have thought about it for a while and I think, no, I believe you should have your wand. A magical person deserves to have their wand on them.'

'You're giving me my wand back?' asked Rowena quietly.

'Yes, I am,' he said. 'But you should not tell anyone and I'll just say that I'll be keeping your wand on me. I don't go out much anymore.'

Sirius held out his arm further and Rowena slowly lifted her own arm and took her wand. Sirius gave her a small wink before making his way to his room. Rowena suddenly felt strange. She didn't know how to feel about this. Sirius just gave her wand back to her. Why would he do that? Was it a trick? Did Albus set this up?

Many thoughts continued to flood Rowena's mind heavily. The more she thought about what had just happened the more confused she became. She liked Sirius, though not in that way. A small part of her worried that he wanted something. Something that she was unable to give him. But then she wondered if this was the opportunity that she had been waiting for.

She now had her wand back, which meant she would be able to leave this place and go back to where she belonged. Rowena smiled as small plan formed in her mind.

## Chapter Eighteen - Escape

Rowena's plan was not going as intended. It was now a couple days away from the end of January and Rowena was no closer to getting out of here. She was becoming impatient but she knew if she didn't do it properly than she wasn't going to get another chance at this. She was waiting until Sirius was alone in the house with her, and if there was another person, she would have to check to see who it was before doing anything.

On the night of the Twenty-Ninth of January, Rowena thought of something. She was about to see Albus for the first time since coming back here. She had been practicing using a fake memory but she wasn't sure it would be any good, but she was going to give it a try. She tried to make the memory look twisted and distant, but Rowena knew there was an extremely good chance that Albus would not fall for it.

She went down the kitchen that night and the whole Order was there, Albus sitting at one end of the table. He made no indication that he noticed Rowena but his eyes found her after a long period. His blue eyes felt like they pierced her soul but Rowena looked away quickly. She didn't need any distraction right now. She needed her father's personality to come out in her now, to help her.

She took a silent, deep breath before sitting down, opposite Albus, who then stood up and walked straight over to her. He lifted her head by the chin and looked into her eyes. 'Show me,' he whispered.

Rowena knew he was referring to the memory. She steadied her mind before lifting the shield. A strong surge of magic hit her and Rowena felt as though she recovered just in time. She brought the memory forward in her mind and played it for Albus. Her vision went black though she knew her eyes were still open and she became lost in the memory too.

Voldemort walked around the drawing room at the Malfoy Manor, with his head held high. He wanted his people to look at him and awe. He knew they all did it. Some of them more than other's though, of course. Then, Voldemort looked down and on the floor, kneeling, was



Hannah Abbott. There was a circle drawn around her and Nagini moved around it.

Hannah looked petrified. There were tears running down her face and her body shook with fear. More than anything, Hannah wanted to die. She wanted it to end right now but the Dark Lord wasn't giving her what she wanted. Hannah knew this would be for her own humiliation and pain. Voldemort noticed the look on her face.

'Oh, my dear, do not fear us,' he said softly. 'We are not going to hurt you; we just want to have some fun with you. I'm planning a raid tonight and I'm hoping you'll join us.'

'And if I don't?' asked Hannah inaudibly.

'Then I'll be forced to be cruel.'

Nagini was still circling Hannah but this she moved towards her quickly and hissed viciously. Hannah almost jumped back and shrieked. 'And if I do go?' she asked.

'Then I might, and I stress that I might, let you go, providing that the Order show up,' said Voldemort quietly. 'We couldn't do anything fun without them.'

Hannah looked up at Voldemort, she was frowning, apparently she had no idea what he was talking about but she didn't want to die. If there was a chance that he would set her free than she had to take it. She wanted to see Neville again, only if it was just once.

She kept her eyes on Voldemort. 'Fine, I will but I don't want to come back here.'

Voldemort smiled widely, his white teeth shining through and his scarlet eyes glowing excitedly. He walked away from Hannah and as he left the room he whispered, 'This will be a good night.'

The memory ended, and Albus pulled himself out of Rowena's thoughts. His eyes lingered on hers for a moment longer. Her shield had gone back up. He nodded slowly.

'Is it truthful?'

'Yes,' Rowena replied immediately.

Albus walked away from her and went back to his seat. He wasn't sure, Rowena could tell. 'I don't believe it,' said Remus clearly.

'Why is that?' asked Rowena, turning her head slowly to look at him.

'Because I don't trust you and I would hate to think that Albus would believe it, you could have faked it,' he said confidently.

'But I did not know when he would enter my mind. He didn't say the incantation,' said Rowena calmly.

Albus' face seemed to soften and Remus couldn't help but notice. He rolled his eyes and threw an arm in the air in annoyance. 'You're going to believe her on something she could fake.'

'I don't think it was a fake,' Albus said gently.

'Why?' asked Remus angrily.

'Because, faking a memory is hard, there aren't many people that could do it,' said Albus tranquilly.

'She's not stupid, Albus,' said Remus, still angry. 'You can't deny that she has her father's talents and if he could fool you for so long, then I'm sure his daughter could. You're still blinded by her. She isn't the same person that you raised.'

'No, I do not believe that this memory is fake....'

Albus told the rest of them what the memory contained and most people seemed pleased that Rowena was finally giving them something, after so long of waiting. Sirius smiled at her and gave her a small wink. Rowena looked away quickly. She didn't want to be found out.

‘Though,’ Albus said slowly. ‘I do have one concern about the memory. The house you were in, was it the Malfoy Manor?’

Every pair of eyes in the room turned to Rowena’s direction. She nodded slowly and she kept calm, though, inside she was panicking. ‘Yes,’ she replied softly. ‘We were at the Malfoy Manor.’

‘Why not tell us this before?’ asked Remus, his voice rising.

‘I don’t know. I think a part of me doesn’t want to choose.’

‘Choose what?’ asked Harry.

‘Sides,’ Rowena replied. A lot of people frowned at her and she sighed. ‘How easy would you found it to betray your family, no matter who they are or what they’ve done? I don’t think anyone would find the choice as easy as they think.’

Rowena stopped. She had nothing more to say. She got up from her seat and she left, returning to her bedroom. The members in the kitchen all looked around at each other. No-one really knew what to say about what just happened.

‘We could check it out,’ suggested Fleur.

‘I agree,’ Albus said shortly after.

Two days later it was a Saturday and the Order were getting ready to go. Rowena stood at the top of the stairs and she watched some of them. It didn’t take long for Sirius to join her side. ‘Are you staying here?’ she asked.

‘Of course,’ he replied. ‘So is Remus.’

‘Really....’

Rowena hadn’t expected that. She didn’t think Remus would stay, it would be the first time. There had to be a reason. ‘Why isn’t he going?’

Sirius' eyes narrowed but the look disappeared quickly. He shrugged. 'I don't know. He said something about the coming full moon or something.'

Rowena didn't believe that. She knew Remus didn't trust her. He wanted to watch her. He wanted to make sure nothing went wrong. And speaking of Remus, he began walking up the stairs, he stopped half-way when he saw Rowena and Sirius standing side by side, leaning on the railing.

'Do you still have her wand, Sirius?'

Sirius nodded. 'Yes,' he replied slyly.

Remus remained where he was, it was apparent that he actually wanted proof. Rowena nonchalantly passed her wand into Sirius hand which was sitting behind her back. He then moved around quickly and showed it to Remus, who nodded and went back downstairs. Sirius smiled and handed it back to Rowena who placed it back in her pocket.

Rowena decided to return to her room and wait.

A couple hours later, Rowena heard the front door close and lock again. She waited for another hour before leaving her room. She went straight to the kitchen but no-one was there. She then made her way back up the stairs and up the hallway to the living room. Both, Remus and Sirius were there and they both instantly looked at her when she entered the room. Rowena decided that the time was now.

She looked at Sirius and gestured for him to follow her. 'Can I talk to you for a moment, alone,' she said politely.

Sirius nodded and he got up, Remus watched them leave the room together. Rowena led Sirius down the end of the hallways to the front hall and then she stopped. Sirius laughed in confusion. 'What's going on?' he asked uncertain.

'I'm sorry,' Rowena whispered.

Before Sirius could react it was too late. Rowena was already holding her wand at Sirius. 'Expelliarmus,' she shouted.

Sirius' wand flew from his inside his robe and slipped through his fingers; he yelped as he tried to grab it Rowena took a hold of it quickly before lifting her wand at Sirius again. 'Impedimenta,' she yelled.

A loud, heavy thud echoed the front hall as Sirius slumped against the wall. Rowena knew she might be too late to return to the Malfoy Manor, her father may already have left. Rowena heard a sudden noise in the living room, Remus heard it.

She tapped the front door with her wand and it clicked many times as it opened. She turned the knob and started to open the door as Remus ran in. 'Colloportus,' he shouted. The front door then slammed shut, making a squelching noise as it did.

Rowena turned and looked at Remus, her eyes narrowed. Remus looked almost livid. 'I knew you couldn't be trusted!'

'I don't want to hurt you,' she said quietly.

'I find that hard to believe.'

They had their wands pointed at each other. Rowena didn't want to lose this opportunity. She needed to leave and it had to be tonight. She had waited too long, she didn't want to wait much longer.

'Expelliarmus,' Remus shouted.

Rowena blocked the spell with a flick of her wand. Remus' face lit up with surprise. 'I didn't know you could do Legilimency?'

'I can't,' she said quietly. 'You're just predictable.'

Before Remus could do anything else Rowena jabbed her wand at Remus. 'Crucio,' she shouted.

The curse hit Remus square in the chest and he fell to his knees, writhing in pain. Rowena unsealed the door and was half-way out before she lifted the curse. For a moment, Remus couldn't move. Rowena ran from the house and half-way up Grimmauld Place, she noticed Remus was chasing her. Rowena stopped and turned to face him, then Remus stopped.

She smiled and waved at him, then she was gone.

When Rowena arrived at her destination, she collapsed to the ground and she immediately heard alarmed voices, all talking loudly. Rowena was in the gardens of the Malfoy Manor and it seemed the Order were already here.

'Albus, there's someone here,' said Moody gruffly. 'Someone apparated.'

'Who do you think it was?' Tonks asked looking around frantically.'

'It could have been Remus,' Hermione suggested. Tonks immediately turned her head towards Hermione, who added, 'or Sirius.'

'Or Rowena,' said Kingsley.

'She doesn't have her wand,' said Ron.

'What if she does,' announced a voice.

It went quiet as the Order members turned and saw Remus. Tonks ran over and she appeared even more frantic than before. 'Remus!' she exclaimed. 'Is everything alright?'

'Sirius is back at headquarters,' he started quickly. 'Rowena has her wand she fled.'

'Was it you that arrived just before?'

'I got here just a few seconds ago, why?' asked Remus.

‘Then that means someone else is here and it just might be Rowena,’ said Harry firmly.

‘Then I suggest we start looking,’ said Moody.

Everyone there murmured their agreement and their search began. Rowena was still in the garden, hiding behind one of the many tall hedges. Rowena swore under her breath. What was she going to do now? Then she thought of it, it was so simple. She could just apparate to somewhere else. Rowena tightened her grip on her wand and she tried to think of somewhere but before she could get the location right, a stunning spell went flying past her, hitting the side of the hedge.

Rowena straightened to her feet at a small jump. It was Harry who fired the shot. ‘She’s here,’ he yelled.

Rowena sent a curse at him but Harry ducked and it flew over his head. Rowena turned on her heel and made a run for it around the other side of the garden. She was seen by everyone. Spells and curses flew in all directions and all of them just barely missing her body. She ran around to the side of the house and she leaned against it, breathing heavily.

She then moved quickly and continued running down the side of the house, but it didn’t take long for someone to block her view, Kingsley. Many spells were exchanged between them. Rowena eventually stunned him and he fell to the ground. Rowena continued running but before stopping when she heard more voices ahead of her. She was still panting though she tried to be quiet about it. It would give her away.

She expected Kingsley to kill her during that exchange. She didn’t think an Auror at his standard would have any trouble defeating someone as her. She hadn’t been out of school for too long, she wasn’t too experience at this sort of thing.

Rowena moved slowly and she peered around the corner. Hermione, Bill and Sirius were in the way of her escape route. She just needed to get through them and she’d be fine. Another spell flew past

Rowena catching her arm. She yelled in pain and she reached with her wand, slashing at anything and it connected with something but Rowena didn't know what it was, she just ran straight for it, stunning the three people in front of her.

She ran and she stopped as she heard Albus' voice call to her. She turned and saw Albus at least fifty feet from her. He was holding his wand but it was at his side. It didn't seem like he was going to use it tonight. Rowena looked around her, but couldn't see anyone so she got the location in the mind but before leaving she decided to hear what Albus had to say.

'Rowena,' he called out. 'I know you're angry....'

'You know nothing!' Rowena shouted back at him.

'And I know you're confused. You've done well so far, give up while you're ahead.'

'You just don't want me to go back to my father,' yelled Rowena.

She felt her body shake with rage but she kept it together. She could feel the warm tingling of blood down her arm from the cut on her shoulder from the spell that hit her. She still kept her mind on the location while also keeping her eyes on Albus. She didn't want to fall for his tricks.

'You're right,' said Albus. 'I do not want you to return to him, it would be a big mistake.'

Rowena's breathing became louder and panicky. She took a few steps back. Her feet almost scraping along the tar of the road, but she knows that there wasn't much further she could go. This was a closed street. It ended and curved around. Her eyes were still on Albus.

'You don't understand,' said Rowena desperately.



'I understand better than you think,' responded Albus. 'You're a better person than you know. You're a better person than your father. Do not turn into him. It will destroy you.'

'Stop!' she screamed at the top of her voice. 'I don't want to hear it!'

'But you must,' said Albus firmly.

Albus then raised his wand and a spell flew towards Rowena quickly, hitting her on her right shin. She screamed and her leg collapsed, under her weight. She didn't know what the spell had been but definitely wished she knew what it was. It felt like a useful one to know.

'Drop your wand,' Albus shouted at her.

'Never,' she screamed at him.

She wasn't about to give up now, she had come so far. All she needed was to get away from here but it was proving harder than she first thought. Rowena held her wand firmly in her hand and she waited for the right moment. Her head dropped and when it happened, she heard many loud footsteps running towards her. She knew they were after her now.

She closed her eyes and quickly mentally concentrated on the place that she wanted to go. The first place she thought of was the village where her mother's pub was. She opened her eyes. The Order was still a far away from her. She gave one final thought and with a loud pop, she was gone.

Rowena yelled in pain as she landed on her side onto the hard ground beneath her. She lifted her arm and turned her face to the ground and shut her eyes tightly, expecting an attack. But it never came. After several minutes, Rowena finally moved and she looked around. She wasn't too far from her mother's old pub. Next, Rowena did the only thing she could think of.

'Morsmordre.'

Rowena had heard the Death Eaters use it when she went on a raid with them. She also knew that the Order would check out the sighting of a Dark Mark also, but maybe her father would wonder who would send it when he never ordered it to be.

It didn't take long for someone to arrive. She heard someone calling out threatening sentences, ones that Rowena hoped to never hear uttered again. She only called back when she heard a familiar voice. 'I'm here,' she screamed.

Rowena waited and she eventually saw three figures running towards her. They were all dressed in Death Eater robes and masks. They all stopped at the sight of her. She looked them over before saying. 'Show your faces.'

They obeyed and removed their masks. She recognised all of them, Dolohov, Avery and Alecko. 'You sent the mark?' asked Avery. He sounded almost afraid.

'Yes, I did, now do you plan on helping me or just standing there?' asked Rowena irritably. 'The Order could be here at any second.'

Dolohov walked over, his pale, twisted face looked happy. He put his wand away and picked Rowena up on to her feet and Rowena placed an arm around him for support. Avery and Alecko then moved into position and they disappeared together.

## Chapter Nineteen - Confessions

The Order were all wondering what went wrong. They thought it would have been easier to capture Rowena than it actually had been. They all returned to Grimmauld Place and they all filed into the kitchen once again. The mood was tautened and relationships felt strained from the Second War, which never seemed like it was going to end.

Sirius had been healed by Albus and was now slumped in one of the many kitchen chairs. He had trusted Rowena and she used it against him. He had been foolish and he had become aware of it. Remus was stunned and Harry wasn't sure what to think or say next.

'What are we going to do?' asked Hermione. She was looking around the table at everyone, hoping that someone had an answer for her. Her face was strained with exhaustion and stress. Her eyes kept filling up with tears but they never overflowed, she kept managing to hold them back.

'I don't know,' replied Albus. 'I didn't think it would turn out like this.'

'But you must have had an inkling that it would,' said Harry almost angrily. 'She appears to be just like Voldemort. We haven't cornered her and I don't think we questioned her nearly enough.'

'We did find out where they were hiding though,' said Ron.

'Yeah, but what good does it do now?' asked Harry impatiently. 'Voldemort and his followers are no longer there. It was Rowena that we needed.'

'She was able to fight all of us off,' said Tonks distantly. 'All of us.'

'She has her father's talents,' said Kingsley. 'I think we underestimated her ability. Next time we should be more careful.'

'What about the Dark Mark that was in the sky earlier?' asked Ron.

'It was too far away,' replied Kingsley. 'We didn't even get half-way to it when it disappeared.'

'So we're guessing that Rowena sent it?' Hermione asked.

'Yes,' said Remus quietly. He then turned to Albus. 'Do you know where Voldemort would go and hide now?'

Albus shrugged very faintly. 'I am not sure. There are many places in which Voldemort can hide.'

'Is there any places you know of that he wouldn't go to then?' asked Harry.

'Yes,' said Albus softly. 'He wouldn't go back to any place related to his Muggle upbringing and I don't think he would return to the Riddle House, since he stayed there a few years ago. I think it's possible that he might return to Albania but that's a big guess.'

There was a bit of silence.

'I think we can all sort it out later,' said Bill quietly. 'I think we need the injured to be looked at.'

'Was Rowena injured?' asked Harry quickly.

'Yes,' replied Kingsley. 'Someone got her in the arm, badly...'

'That was me,' replied Tonks quietly. 'Though she got me back too...' Tonks removed part of her shirt and there was a large gash across her shoulder that stretched to the top of her chest.

'... and Albus hit her in the shins,' said Kingsley finishing. 'She seemed to be bleeding heavily.'

There was another period of silence.

'So, Sirius,' said Remus softly, breaking the heavy silence. 'How did Rowena get her wand?'

Many members looked over at Sirius, who was still slumped heavily in his chair. He didn't look like he wanted to talk about anything right now. He shrugged. 'I don't know.'

'Oh come on, Sirius, you do know,' said Remus, his voice slightly rising.

'Ok, Ok,' he shouted before lowering his voice again. 'I gave it back to her.'

'You what?' shouted Albus.

A lot of people at the table jumped. Harry, Ron and Hermione and some other ex-students looked extremely startled. This was one side of Albus they had never seen before. It was a frightening image.

'Look, I didn't mean to but I thought she was changing. I gave it back to her weeks ago. I didn't think she'd use it.'

'How could you be so stupid, Sirius!' yelled Remus.

'Hey!' shouted Harry, standing up. The tone of his voice got much attention. 'I don't think we should be blaming each other here. What happened has happened and nothing can change that now. We need to move forward and get to the next plan of action. If we turn on each other now, it will give Voldemort what he wants and I will die before I let that happen.'

The room then went deathly quiet until Hermione spoke. 'Harry's right. We all need to stick together. We all make mistakes; let's not make this one the one that pulls us apart.'

Murmurs of agreement went around the table and Harry back down. He looked to the new members of the Order, Ginny, Neville, Luna, he knew they would join. Even a few other members of Dumbledore's Army joined including Angelina, who was now also dating Fred, Alicia, Katie, Oliver, Cho, Seamus, Dean, even Tonks' parents decided to join and help this time round. It made Harry proud when he looked around the table.

When Harry's thoughts went to Voldemort, he thought of the Horcruxes, the diary was gone, the ring was gone, the cup was gone, as was the locket and now they only needed the diadem and Nagini, which would be the hardest one to get to since she was always with Voldemort.

Albus had finally told the rest of the Order about the Horcrux's, it would make them easier to find. Harry couldn't imagine where the diadem was but Albus was sure it was located in Albania still. And to get to Nagini, they needed to find Voldemort, which was becoming an increasingly difficult task.

Harry only hoped that Rowena would fail somewhere and give them the opportunity that they needed. She was the key to getting to Voldemort.

Rowena walked along the small, narrow path up to a large house sitting on top of a hill. She was still supported by Dolohov. She attempted to ask questions but found it difficult as she struggled to breathe. All she wanted to do right now was lay down.

When they came right up to the house, Rowena couldn't believe how big it was. As she panted, she looked it over. It looked extremely old, and the whole place seemed overgrown with wild plants, which were climbing up the front of the house. The windows were dark and the roof was covered in leaves from the tall trees around the back. The grass was tall and the colour of the house was a faded black.

Alecto moved forwards and tapped the front door with her wand. The heavy, black door creaked open and they all walked inside. Rowena looked up and noticed that the inside looked a little better than the outside, but Rowena got the impression that this place had been fixed up.

Many more Death Eaters came into the front hall, including Bellatrix, who for the first time appeared shaken. She rounded on Avery. 'Why is she in that state? What did you do to her? Do you know how pissed our Lord will be?'

'I'm sure they do, Bella,' said a hissy voice.

A few Death Eaters jumped at the sound and they moved away. Voldemort walked into the room, the dull light hitting him. The Death Eaters bowed their heads but Rowena tried to raise hers, to look at her father. Once Voldemort's eyes found his daughter, a small panic rose within him.

He looked to Dolohov. 'Take her to our medical room and have Severus take care of her, though stay there and make sure he does it properly.'

Dolohov nodded and bowed his head again before taking Rowena down the hallway to some stairs and they went down. Rowena felt as though she couldn't speak but she hoped she wasn't being put into a cell. She felt faintly happy when they entered a room that looked like a dungeon, at least it didn't look like a cell.

'What do you want?' asked a voice.

Rowena jumped and her eyes found Snape as he moved from the back of the room. She didn't see him at first; he was dressed in his usual black attire.

'I have Rowena here with me,' said Dolohov curtly. 'The Dark Lord requests that you heal her immediately.'

Only then did Snape move towards them, he moved effortlessly, as though he were gliding not walking. He inspected her before walking to a cupboard. He opened it and after much searching he pulled out a small vial containing a clear liquid. Rowena wondered if she was going to have to drink that.

Snape made his way back over to them and he handed the vial to Rowena, who just looked at it. Snape then sighed in annoyance and took the top of himself and put it to Rowena's lips. Slowly, she opened her mouth and Snape poured the contents in.

'It's a healing potion,' he said as she drank it. 'The effect should be almost instantaneous.'

When the contents of the vial were gone, Snape moved away and placed the vial on a small table. Rowena felt warmth spread throughout her body as it began to work. It didn't take long for Rowena to feel better and Dolohov slowly began to let go of her. When it was finished, Dolohov led Rowena back upstairs, after she said a small thank you.

They walked back to the first floor and back up the hallway. There wasn't anyone around. He led her to the living-room, where the rest of the Death Eaters, along with her father were. They were all sitting at a long, silvery table, but nothing was being said. The room was quiet and all the Death Eaters were focused on something else.

Voldemort was sitting at the head of the table, with Nagini wrapped around his shoulders. Every so often, she hissed slightly. When Rowena entered the room, Voldemort looked straight at her. His white face slowly turned into a smile.

'I'm surprised it took you so long to return to me,' he said quietly. 'Been having fun with the Order?'

'No,' said Rowena.

'You must be tired,' said Voldemort, still watching his daughter. 'I think you should get some sleep. Dolohov, take my daughter to her new bed chambers and if she needs anything, get it for her.'

Dolohov bowed again and once again Rowena followed Dolohov in to the hallway and back to the stairs, but this time they went up four floors, to level five, which wasn't very big. There only appeared to be two doors, one at each end. Dolohov turned to the left and made his way to the door ahead. Once there he stopped.

'It will only work with your wand,' he explained. 'Just tap it and it should open.'

Rowena nodded and she took her wand out from her tatted robes and tapped the door once. It unlocked and Rowena entered the room, Dolohov followed. Her bed chambers here looked the same as the



ones at the Malfoy Manor. She loved it. This time she hoped to stay here.

The next night, Rowena was called into the living room. She found her father in there, with his Death Eaters, all of them sitting in the same spot as before. Rowena was feeling unsure about her place here with her father. It felt different to last time.

'My dear daughter,' said Voldemort quietly. 'Come here and sit beside me. We have much to discuss.'

Rowena nodded and she calmly walked over to her father and sat down on his right hand side. She looked at him and he continued to stare back. 'So, my dear, where have you been all this time?'

'At the Order's Headquarters,' she replied honestly.

'And why?' her father asked.

'I was trapped there.'

Voldemort gave her a small, unusual look. 'Tell me what happened.'

'Alright,' said Rowena confidently. 'I know I said that I could not find any followers for you but I decided to ask a couple of people anyway and I went to Bulgaria and Australia to have a look and I ran into Macnair, who said you told him to follow me. Anyway, I thought I should return to the Order because I thought Albus would be worried about where I was, but it turned out he had me followed too and my actions caused him to question me.'

'I was disarmed when I returned to the Order and I was told that I wasn't leaving again. The other day I managed to show Albus a fake memory, twisted with truth of course, and he believed it. Before then, Sirius Black had given me my wand back and I waited until the right moment to use it. Sirius stayed behind when the Order left and so did Lupin.'

'I managed to shake both of them off and I apparated to the Malfoy Manor but when I got there I noticed that the Order were there also. I

hid, but then Harry quickly found me and I ran for it. I was hit in the arm by someone, I'm unsure of who it was and I hit them back, the damage done, I'm not sure of either. I had a confrontation with Albus and he hit me in the right shin with a silent spell, I hadn't expected it. Does that answer everything?'

Voldemort seemed impressed for some reason. 'Why did Sirius Black give you your wand back?'

'Because I got him to trust me and it was misplaced of course,' said Rowena calmly.

'And that's the reason why we had to leave the Malfoy Manor,' said Voldemort. 'For a while I thought you had turned on me and joined with Dumbledore.'

Rowena silent shook her head. 'Why did you apparated to your mother's old pub?' asked Voldemort.

'I don't know,' said Rowena, shrugging. 'It was the first place I thought of going to and I sent the Dark Mark because I was sure you would have it checked out, especially since only your followers use it.'

'Clever girl,' whispered Voldemort. 'You really do have my abilities. Escaping from almost the entire Order on one's own is no easy task.'

'I know. I'm sure if I were there much longer than I would have died,' she said quietly.

Voldemort silently agreed, nodding his head. Rowena had some questions to ask around here. 'What happened to Blaise and Hannah?'

'They're still with us,' replied Voldemort.

'I thought you were going to kill Blaise?' she asked, a little shocked.

'No,' said Voldemort faintly. 'I had asked you to do it before and I think it should still be your job.'

'I see,' she said inaudibly.

'I left Blaise for you to finish off, though; I daresay he's ready to die.'

A few of the Death Eaters laughed. Rowena wasn't sure how to feel about that. 'What about Hannah?'

'Oh, she's fine,' replied Voldemort dismissively. 'She has been quite entertaining for my followers.'

'I see,' said Rowena quietly.

'Now,' said Voldemort with authority. 'It is time for you to choose your protector.'

'Do I need one?' she asked.

'Yes,' said Voldemort, firmly. 'I insist.'

'Alright,' she said looking around the room. She noticed a few of the Death Eaters sat up straighter, hoping to be chosen. Rowena was surprised to see that even Bella looked as though she wanted to be picked but Rowena definitely wasn't sure about Bella. She had disapproved of her being here and Rowena was sure that Bella might try and kill her if given the chance.

Her eyes passed over the Lestrangle brothers, but she wasn't sure she wanted them watching her back either. Then she found Greyback. In her mind, she immediately said no to that, she didn't want a werewolf watching and following her either. The Carrow's were next but Rowena dismissed that too. It was the incest part that irked her.

She then saw Avery, he seemed an okay candidate but to Rowena he didn't seem strong enough. She then saw Dolohov and Yaxley sitting next to each other. She knew they were both very strong and capable wizards but she knew that Dolohov had a real and nasty evil streak and Yaxley was someone she didn't know too well. She then saw Travers, but she didn't know him too well either and it bothered her. She didn't want someone protecting her that she didn't know very well.

And then, she came to Walden. He almost seemed too perfect for the job. Rowena looked him over well. His delicate black moustache was neatly combed and his black hair was longish and pointed. Rowena imagined his body to be tight and musclier, she was sure of it but she took into account that he had helped her on her first raid with the Death Eaters, he got her out of there and he said he wasn't leaving her behind. And she was aware of his abilities.

'I choose Walden Macnair to be my protector,' she announced.

'Are you sure, my dear?' asked Voldemort.

'Yes,' she said nodding.

'Very good,' said Voldemort, almost happily. 'You are responsible for my daughter. Wherever she goes, you'll be there and if she's in trouble, you will be there to help her, understand?'

Walden stood up and bowed. 'Yes,' he said clearly.

'And know this, Macnair, if you touch my daughter inappropriately, do not expect me to be lenient, I am trusting you with her,' said Voldemort in a commanding tone.

'I understand,' said Walden clearly.

'Good,' said Voldemort. 'Your new job with her begins immediately.'

Walden bowed and Rowena got up from her seat and left the room, she wanted to be in her room, to just be alone. Walden followed her. As they walked up the stairs Walden had to ask. 'Why choose me?'

'You know why.'

'Because I'm irresistible?' he asked mockingly.

'Don't be an ass,' said Rowena in slightly annoyance. 'I chose you because on the last raid you helped me. None of the other Death Eaters did and you said you wouldn't leave me behind.'

'Fair enough,' he said quietly.

She went to her room and ordered for Walden to remain outside. He eventually agreed and guarded the door. Rowena lay down without removing her clothes and she rubbed her eyes with both hands. She was glad this day was almost over. She needed a clean, new day to begin.

Near the end of February, Rowena was still at the Riddle House. She had another talk with her father and he told her all about this house and his past events with Harry Potter. Rowena then started to wonder why she never asked about Harry before. She always just thought she didn't care about him and she was learning that she was right. She didn't care about Harry and his problems.

Rowena's biggest problem right now was Walden. She didn't mind the whole bodyguard thing but she was finding it really difficult to get rid of him. He followed her everywhere like a little puppy dog. He always had his wand out and he kept himself alert at most times. He was the only other person who could go into Rowena's bed chambers without her.

He stayed by her beside as she slept, which Rowena constantly found creepy. Walden was normally asleep in the afternoon for a few hours. Rowena hated that he always seemed fine with the amount of sleep he was getting now, though Rowena wasn't sure how much sleep he got before.

Thoughts about it went through Rowena's mind as she walked to her father's chambers again. It was after midnight but she knew her father would still be awake, she just hoped that Nagini wouldn't be. She hated that snake with a passion. When she reached the door, she knocked firmly. Her father whispered in Parseltongue for her to enter, he knew it was her.

She opened the door and her father was sitting in his throne-like chair, staring at nothing. Rowena kept wondering what he was thinking about. It intrigued her greatly.

'What is it?' asked Voldemort quietly.

Rowena did not move from near the door, though she did close it as she didn't want Walden listening in on the conversation. 'I just wanted to know if you could tell me what you have planned.'

She saw his head shake slowly, almost thoughtfully. 'No, not just yet,' he said, his voice hissy. 'There is nothing you need to know yet but there is something I would like to offer you.'

Voldemort stood up from his chair walked over to Rowena and his red eyes searched his daughter's light brown ones. He stroked her cheeks with two long, white fingers. Rowena closed her eyes at his touch, he was cold. She opened them again and her father was still looking down at her.

He took out his wand and for a moment Rowena shook, thinking he was about to curse her but he only conjured a chair similar to his, except that this one was smaller and red in colour. 'Please,' he said softly.

'I really do not feel like sitting,' said Rowena nervously.

It didn't seem to matter. Voldemort seemed indifferent on the subject. He ignored his own seat and walked to the window and peered outside into the darkness as he pressed his pale, white fingertips together.

'I would like to make you my number two,' he said quietly. 'Although ... in return, I want to know what you did to your mother.'

'I ... I-I don't r-really want to,' said Rowena slowly.

She turned back to the door but she found herself unable to open it, even with her wand. Rowena rest her head against it in defeat. She could feel the tears burning the back of her eyes. This is something that she had kept in for too long.

She turned to look at her father. He had not moved. Rowena approached him to the side. 'Please,' she begged. 'I just don't want to.'

'You don't have a choice right now,' said Voldemort, apparently not hearing her. 'Tell me, did she cry? Did she beg you to stop? Did you not hear her? What did you learn of yourself....?'

'Stop!' Rowena shouted, her voice echoing within her own ears. The tears that had threatened to drop fell onto her robes. Rowena ignored them. She fell to her knees and sobbed into her hands. Voldemort continued to ignore her. He was waiting for her to confess which did not take long.

Rowena felt her hold on it crack and shatter. 'I killed her,' she blurted out uncontrollably. 'I went to see her, it wasn't supposed to happen, we were only supposed to talk but when she saw me she seemed surprised, shocked, upset by me being there. She didn't want to discuss anything with me. I found out she was getting married and four months pregnant. How could she do that to me? She gave me up and left me alone with a complete stranger. She didn't even have the guts to raise me herself!'

Finally, Voldemort moved. He turned and looked down at his daughter and a smile appeared across his thin lips. He bent down and ran one finger down her wet cheek. He seemed more than pleased with what just happened.

Voldemort moved his hand away from his daughter, his face tightened. 'I am happy you have finally let go but you still have much to learn, my dear. Besides, you still have Blaise to dispose of.'

'What if he joins?' asked Rowena defeated, wiping the tears from her face and standing up.

'We have already been over this,' said Voldemort quietly. He made his way back to his black chair and sat down. Rowena didn't know what else to say. The confession was done, over already, there were no more questions. She didn't want to kill Blaise for no reason. There

must have been some way to change his mind. If Blaise didn't want to die then surely he should change his mind about it all.

'Would you let me talk to him again?' asked Rowena quietly. She didn't want to push this subject but she wanted to find another way to do this and she wanted to change the subject quickly, to think about something else.

'Maybe,' replied Voldemort.

Rowena wasn't sure what he meant by that and she didn't ask but somehow Rowena knew the conversation between them now was over and he had nothing more to say to her.

Her father made no movement so Rowena decided to end it there. For some reason she bowed before leaving her father's chambers and made her way to her own, with Walden following her all the way there. Walden closed the door behind her and he stood in front of it. Rowena looked to him. She frowned. Something felt different but she didn't know what it was.

As she walked to the wardrobe, she could feel his eyes on her back. She froze for a slight moment before turning to face him. 'I think you should turn around while I get changed,' she said.

'Are you sure?'

'Yes,' said Rowena, firmly.

Walden smirked momentarily before turning around to face the door. Rowena hesitated before removing her clothing and putting her pyjama's on. When she was finished she looked at Walden again. 'You can turn now,' she said clearly.

Walden did just that. He turned back round so he was looking at the whole room. He reminded Rowena of a Muggle security guard, the way he stood there with his hands together in front of him and that very serious look on his face. Rowena moved over to the bed and moved the covers back. She then looked at her protector again, he



hadn't moved. Rowena shook her head, mostly at herself, and got into bed. She was still slightly unnerved about him watching her.

## Chapter Twenty - Plans

Tonight, number twelve Grimmauld Place was quieter than usual. The only people in the house were Sirius, Remus and Hermione. Harry and the rest of his friends decided to go out for a small and very private drink. Tonks and many other members were at work, while the Weasley's returned to the Burrow.

Sirius at the moment was upstairs, in his mother's old room, feeding Buckbeak some old chicken bones that had been left downstairs. Sirius was in no mood to go out tonight. Lately, he didn't really feel like doing anything. The last time Rowena was here, she had gotten the better of him and he still felt completely foolish whenever he thought about it.

Down the stairs one floor was Remus' old room. He still used it when he stayed here overnight; normally it happened when an Order meeting ran on for longer than planned. Tonight Tonks was working and Remus wasn't sure if she would be coming home tonight. He knew Hermione was here too but he kept moving around his room, cleaning and putting things away, anything to keep his mind away from those thoughts, which were terribly, terribly wrong for him to have.

His desire to keep himself busy only lasted another an hour. He was done cleaning, so he sat down on his bed. He had hoped for a meeting tonight, they hadn't had one since Rowena had escaped. Remus still thought about it a lot, more often than he should, he knew that. But he kept wondering what would have happened if he acted sooner. Rowena might not have escaped.

It greatly surprised him that she seemed to get away so easily, though he knew she had her father's talents, nothing that he thought were to brag about anyway since they would probably be used for evil and for her father's bidding. Remus sighed. He knew he wasn't the only one to blame though. Sirius had trusted her and it was misplaced. He knew from the start that she couldn't be trusted. He just wondered why it took everyone else so long to see it and then his thoughts turned to Dumbledore.

Dumbledore was a great man, but when it came to Rowena he seemed blind and foolish. Remus knew that Dumbledore raised Rowena from a baby but surely he couldn't have forgotten who she was and what she could possibly be capable of, though, Remus also knew that love sometimes doesn't show you what you need to know. He knows it can be blinding and it can be worse when you hear something about someone you love, something you don't want to hear.

Remus sighed again. He really should stop thinking about things so much. It doesn't help anyone to dwell on them, it just creates more questions for him and the answers are becoming scarce. Remus ran his hands through his light brown hair and rubbed his hands over his tired face. He was younger than he really looked. It was one of the disadvantages of being a werewolf.

There came a light tap at his bedroom door. He looked at it, he held his breath. A small part of him wished it was Sirius but he knew it had to be Hermione. Sirius wasn't really talking to anyone lately, not since the last incident.

Remus got to his feet and he walked across the room to the door. He opened it and it was Hermione that was standing there. She looked happy, fresh, somehow. She smiled at him and he returned it.

'Is something wrong?' he asked politely.

She shook her head gently. 'No, I'm just looking for someone to talk to and I don't think Sirius is in the talking mood, so I was wondering if you were.'

Remus thought about it but then quickly decided to let Hermione inside. Her smile lingered for a little bit longer as she looked around the room. When she reached the middle she stood. She flexed her toes; she could feel the softness of a sheep skin rug beneath her bare feet. Hermione turned and looked at Remus, who was still closing the bedroom door.

He sighed heavily and looked at the woman in his room. He was married, this was wrong. He kept telling himself the same thing over

and over but he never seemed to understand his own message. He moved into the room and stood near Hermione. He looked her over and Hermione noticed. He mentally kicked himself but Hermione didn't seem to mind.

She smiled again at Remus, but this time he had trouble returning it. She closed the distance between them and she looked up into Remus' hazel eyes which were sprinkled with gold. Remus glanced back into Hermione's chocolate coloured eyes. Hermione took one step closer. A little closer than Remus knew was safe.

He could see the faint brown freckles spread across her nose and they continued under eyes but were only visible close up. Remus' breathing slowly turned shallow and he noticed Hermione's eyes kept looking and lingering on his lips.

'We can't,' breathed Remus, trying to keep his voice steady.

'I know you're married to Tonks but....' she trailed off, unsure of what to say.

'Why not give Ron another chance?' asked Remus trying to shift the subject.

'He's immature,' said Hermione. 'And he's jealous and over-protective and possessive and... Well, the list could go on,' she said smiling.

Remus couldn't help but chuckle at that. Hermione was intelligent and bright. He loved that in a woman, he just wished Hermione was a little older. He looked away and started to move but Hermione grabbed his arm firmly.

'Please...'

She moved closer and their clothes were now touching. Hermione's breathing hitched in her throat and she exhaled slowly. She pushed herself onto her tiptoes and gently pressed her lips against Remus'. They both moaned faintly at the touch but Remus tried his hardest not to return the kiss. Hermione pushed away and walked to the door quickly, tears in her eyes.

'I'm sorry,' she whispered.

She grabbed the door knob and turned it quickly but the door only opened for a split second before it was slammed shut by Remus, who was now standing behind Hermione. He looked down at her and waited for her to turn around. Her head was bowed and she gently wiped under her eyes.

Remus couldn't wait. He grabbed her arms and turned her around so that she faced him. She seemed surprised by his dominance. Remus pushed Hermione against the door and he bent his head and crushed his lips against hers.

Hermione instinctively wrapped her arms around Remus' neck and she immediately submitted, allowing him inside her mouth. His tongue explored every place possible. Hermione moaned into his mouth and Remus pushed his body against Hermione's, making her squeal. Remus' hands then travelled down Hermione's body and came to rest on her hips; their kiss still had not broken.

When they finally pulled apart, they both looked at each other. They were both flushed and had their mouths open. Neither of them knew what to say.

'I'm sorry,' said Remus after another moment's silence.

'Don't be,' breathed Hermione.

Remus walked away and ran a hand through his greying hair. A part of Remus was screaming for him to stop but another part told him to go for it, that he might never get an opportunity with Hermione like this again but then his thoughts went to his wife and son, they didn't deserve this. He looked back at Hermione and she smiled faintly and nodded her understanding.

She opened the door and slipped out quietly and Remus walked to his bed and lay on his stomach and buried his head in the pillows. He had been a fool. Hermione would make a wonderful wife for any man; he shouldn't be out ruining her with his werewolf ways. Remus went

back to his constant thinking while mentally hurting himself the entire night.

Rowena made her way down the steps into the dungeons. The strong, putrid smell hit her instantly. She crunched her nose before looking to each cell. Blaise and Hannah were all still there. Rowena entered Blaise's cell. This time around he wasn't tied or chained to the wall but he had settled himself into one of the corners.

He jumped when his cell door opened but he quickly relaxed when he saw it was just Rowena and not someone else. Most of his clothes were ripped and shredded. His skin was dirty and grimy with blood and sweat. Rowena also couldn't help but notice how many scratches Blaise had all over his body.

It was obvious to Rowena that Greyback has been having a fun time with Blaise in her absence. She was a little surprised that Greyback hadn't turned him into werewolf but Rowena knew her father wanted her to kill Blaise and no one else. So, maybe Greyback was forced to play nice with this toy. It made Rowena slightly sick thinking about it. Blaise didn't deserve this. This was worse than death and she was sure Blaise knew it.

'How are you?' asked Rowena. She conjured a chair and sat down.

Blaise's face turned to anger. 'How do you think I fucking feel?' he spat angrily. 'Greyback won't leave me alone... I can't... I... can't... do this anymore....'

Blaise exhaled sharply and tears rolled down his scarred face. Rowena thought he was once handsome but no longer. She knew Blaise was hurting and because of this, she didn't want to kill him. It would be too much.

'I'm sorry,' whispered Rowena.

'Your apologies mean nothing to me.'

Rowena sighed in slight frustration. 'I will get you out of here....'

'Yeah I'm sure,' he said heavily.

'...you will not die here,' finished Rowena.

'Look how this turned out,' said Blaise

'Well, last time I trusted you and you decided to try and escape,' said Rowena. 'My father will not be so forgiving next time and I can't afford it to happen again but...' she paused slightly. 'I am still going to get you out of here. I believe you've suffered enough.'

'When?' asked Blaise, his breathing quickening.

'It will be soon.'

'Why haven't I been killed yet?' he asked frowning. He moved a little bit away from the corner. He wasn't sure of whether to trust Rowena in this case, but he wanted nothing more than to get out of here, alive.

'Well, it's my job to kill you,' said Rowena. 'I'll think of something and when I do, I shall come back down here.'

Blaise mumbled something but Rowena didn't hear what it was. She left the cell, locking it on the way out and she peered in the other cells. Hannah was lying on the floor but Rowena knew she was alive; her chest was rising and falling. Rowena guessed that she was asleep.

Sometime later, in the middle of March, Rowena finally decided to ask someone about Legilimency and she only knew two people that would be able to teach it, Snape and her father. She had thought about asking her father first but she knew he wanted to get into her mind and she didn't really want to give him that chance, so, on one warm spring night, Rowena knocked on the front door to Snape's house.

Her father had told her where to go. She couldn't believe Snape lived in a Muggle street. It made her wonder if he was part Muggle, though it didn't really matter to her. No-one had yet answered, so Rowena knocked on the door again, this time, harder. After another long stretch, she heard footsteps.

The heavy, black door opened and she saw Snape's pale face, curtained by his oily black hair, poke itself around the door to see outside. He looked Rowena up and down, checking to see if she was alone, which of course, she wasn't. Walden was standing a few feet behind her. She had told him to wait outside until she was finished.

'What do you want?' asked Snape, curtly.

'I would like to speak to you, in private,' she replied politely.

Snape's lip curled but he said nothing. He opened the door and Rowena slinked inside, which wasn't much better than the outside. The living-room wasn't much, there were a few sofas and a large bookcase which stretched along one wall and it was overflowing with books. The walls were all painted grey and it was flaking. The carpet was old and looked rough. Rowena wondered what made Snape stay here.

Snape closed the door and joined her in the living room. 'And what may I do for you?'

'I would like to learn Legilimency,' she said with no hesitation.

'May I ask what for?'

She knew Snape was suspicious but it wasn't really any of his business. 'No, my reasons are my own.'

'Either way, I think you should ask your father,' said Snape delicately. 'He's a far better Legilimens than me, I'm sure he would be more than happy to teach you.'

'Very well,' said Rowena slowly.

Nothing more was said between them and Rowena made her way back to the Riddle house. She entered the drawing room and she stopped suddenly, her father was in here. His head slowly turned to face her.



'Is something wrong, my dear?'

Rowena walked closer to him and she nodded. 'Yes, I want to learn Legilimency.'

'Why not ask Severus?'

'I already did,' said Rowena. 'He told me it would be better if you did it. That you were far more skilled at it than him.'

'And why do you want to learn it?' asked Voldemort quietly.

'I think it could be useful,' replied Rowena honestly.

Voldemort stood up and waved his hand, the chair he had been sitting on disappeared. He had his back turned to Rowena for a moment before looking back at her, his scarlet eyes glowing. 'You'll have to let your guard down.'

'What do you mean?' asked Rowena, confused.

'You must not use Occlumency during these lessons; otherwise it will not work properly.'

'Alright,' said Rowena slowly. 'But how do you teach it?'

'First, we'll need someone to practice on, I'm sure one of my followers would be glad to....'

Rowena cut across. 'And why would I have to not use Occlumency?'

'I'll get to that my dear,' said Voldemort. 'Let it down now. I want you to feel what it's like to have someone in your mind.'

'Um ... right now?'

'Is there something wrong with that?' asked Voldemort, lightly.

Rowena shook her head but it did not convince Voldemort. She didn't feel able to tell him that she didn't want him in her mind, searching

through it at will. She was not a book and especially not an open one at that.

She shifted her weight on to her other foot as she quickly thought about her options, but it turned out that Voldemort wasn't going to give her one. He wanted to see in her mind and this was the best opportunity that he was likely to get. He strode to his daughter so quickly that it looked like a blur and he wrapped a pale, long-fingered hand around her throat.

He squeezed gently and Rowena gasped, her breath catching slightly. Her eyes widened in fear and her father made sure their eyes stayed in contact. She could feel the pressure of her father's mind on her own and she kept her wall up. Rowena could feel the sweat beginning to form on her forehead as she continued to resist.

'Let me in,' hissed Voldemort.

The pressure around her neck became tighter and she gasped for breath again. Rowena now wished she hadn't told Walden to wait in her bed chambers, telling him that she was going to be with her father and that she would be alright.

Her guarded wall was beginning to fail. It was evident that Voldemort's Legilimency skills were no match for her own Occlumency ones. Her father was stronger and more skilled than her and he was going to get into her mind whether she liked it or not.

When her wall broke, Voldemort immediately plundered into every memory he could find and they flashed before Rowena's eyes. She was more than aware that her father was watching everything she could see in front of her.

Her first day at a Muggle primary school. Rowena cringed. It was one of those memories that you never wanted to remember again. Her time at a Muggle primary school didn't last long as her magical abilities came in quickly and she started making too much trouble and Albus didn't want the Muggles to notice anything.

Rowena's first day at Durmstrang, her first meeting with teachers, other students and finally William. She knew her father could feel the hatred that she had for her old Charms teacher. Whenever he floated within her mind, she flinched. She had never wanted to see his face again. Just seeing him made her want to kill him all over again.

Voldemort made a noise but Rowena couldn't really make out what it was and finally the thing came up that Rowena had been dreading more than ever. Her talks with Albus and most especially, the killing of her mother. It felt like Voldemort kept replaying the memory and was burning onto his own mind, so he wouldn't forget it. Rowena wanted to sick.

She had killed her mother but it was a mistake. She didn't mean to kill her, it's just what happened. She had been angry; surely other people could understand that, right?

When Voldemort pulled out of her head, Rowena gasped and the white hand let go of her throat and she fell heavily onto the floor. She bent over and coughed and panted until her breath came back.

'You really do take after me,' said Voldemort softly. Rowena knew he was enjoying this. 'I think you're more like me than you care to admit. And I knew that Albus would try everything in his power to stop it from happening and ... he failed.'

It went quiet and Rowena remained where she was. She had no intention of speaking right now. There was nothing she wanted to say, nothing she wanted to admit to and there was nothing she wanted to talk about.

Voldemort continued his slight mock taunting. 'I suppose there is nothing more satisfying than killing someone without the killing curse. It can be bloody, violent and pleasurable. I prefer the killing curse. I have no time for fools, but I suppose, you don't like the killing curse and I don't blame you. Not much fun in it, is there?'

Rowena shook her head but continued to remain quiet. She was now sitting up but she kept her eyes firmly on the floor.

'Killing your charms teacher wasn't enough, was it? I suppose we all get angry and frustrated. I wonder what Dumbledore would say if he knew you murdered one of your own teachers and under everyone's noses too. So, tell me, how did you kill your charms teacher?'

Rowena had waited a long time to get this out of her head and into someone else's. 'His name was Roger Baransti, he was my charms teacher and he would have a go at me whenever possible. I hated him and I'm sure it was mutual. One night I had a detention with him and I found him quite inappropriate and it ... pushed me over the edge. I could no longer stand it.'

She paused and took a shaky breath; tears stung the back of her eyes and quickly threatened to fall. 'I had learnt that he like to have a drink from a silver goblet he kept on his desk. I decided I would use it against him. One day, I went down to the potions classroom and retrieved some aconite. I snuck into Baransti's office, I was lucky he wasn't there and I noticed the goblet already had something in it.

'It was perfect. I took the plant from my robes and I crushed it up before pouring the entire contents into the silver goblet,' said Rowena, her voice becoming stronger. 'Baransti came back into the office not long and I had to hide. I hid in his liquor cabinet and it didn't take him long to have a drink. He began to choke almost immediately. I was proud of myself. When I knew he was definitely going to die, I jumped out so he would see me and I dropped his wand on the floor near him. I told him that he deserved to die and I still believe that now. If he were alive, I would do it again, with no hesitations and no regrets.'

Rowena stopped talking and she took a deep breath, sighing as she exhaled. She was tired just from telling that story. It hadn't felt it had been this long. Thinking of his death always cheered her up. She imagined that part of her came from her father. She couldn't imagine her mother being that way at all. She seemed like a nice person. A very small part of Rowena wished she could be more like her mother.

'And what about your mother?' asked Voldemort, as though he had just read her thoughts.

'I.... don't.... know....I-'

She seemed unable to say much about it. She didn't want to. Voldemort's thin lips seemed to curl upwards but it wasn't quite a smile, it was more of a leer.

'I wonder what your mother's fiancée would have thought,' said Voldemort, more to himself but Rowena couldn't stay quiet about that.

'I don't care what he would think,' she shouted. She got up off the floor and brushed her robes off quickly. She wanted to be heard on this.

'She abandoned me and left it to someone else to raise me. She then found herself a man and decided to have a baby with him! What about me?' Rowena found herself unable to stop now that she had started.

'She never cared about me,' she shouted so loud that her voice echoed. 'She told me that she wasn't interested in ever meeting me, kept saying that I would have a better life with someone else. She then tried to tell me she was sorry, she wasn't sorry, she just thought it was something I wanted to hear.'

Rowena began to shake with rage but she ignored it. 'Like I told you before, I killed her, yes, but it was an accident. After everything we had talked about I became angry and upset and I lost myself. It didn't feel like it was me doing it at the time. I felt as though I was on the roof looking down at the scene. I think about it now and I feel sick.... but another part of me is glad of what happened. She's gone and can never say that we met.'

The shaking became worse and the tears that threatened to fall earlier were now spilling down her cheeks. She didn't bother to wipe them away. 'As I said, I became angry and upset and I lost myself. She kept apologising and I didn't want to hear it.

'And for some reason I withdrew my wand I then my mother became hysterical and kept saying that I was like you. I couldn't fathom it at the time. It never occurred to me to ask how she escaped. I brandished my wand and it hit her in the neck. The blood poured

down her neck and her pale skin seemed even paler and her eyes had widened. She was shocked, as was I at what I had done. The blood pooled on the floor and she tried to run but she slipped in it and fell to the floor, hitting her head on one of the wooden tables on the way down. There was nothing I could do except get rid of any evidence of my being there and that's what I did.'

When Rowena had finished talking, she collapsed back onto the floor and fell into tears. It was too much to hold now. It was done, someone else now knew about it, even though she knew her father had always suspected her. Though right now, she didn't feel any better after telling her horror story, she felt worse.

She felt like she had just fallen apart. She buried her face within her hands and continued to cry and Voldemort quietly and wordlessly, left the room.

At the end of April, Rowena had finally learnt to use Legilimency, though she knew it wasn't strong. At the moment, she could only look into someone's mind for a short period of time, but she thought it was better than nothing. Her lessons had stopped because her father had been angry lately and it wasn't helping her to learn it.

The Death Eaters had gone on a raid but it went badly, no-one was killed but a few of them were injured and Voldemort had gone with them on this one. It had been a while since he had joined them. He wanted to watch the night's entertainment, but it didn't go according to plan.

The Order had showed up and ruined everything. No Muggles were killed. Voldemort suspected that someone told the Order that they were going to be there. Rowena couldn't think of anyone that would tell them, though she didn't quite trust Snape, or Narcissa Malfoy, even though she wasn't a Death Eater, despite the fact that she was allowed to attend meetings.

All Rowena wanted to do now was to set Blaise free and she going to do it tonight. She told her father her plan on killing him, something fun. She suggested a man-hunt. All Death Eaters involved but they were to only catch him and Rowena would kill him if found. She said if the

Death Eaters caught him instead of her then they would start again and she suggested it be done in the graveyard.

Rowena was pleased when Voldemort came back to her and approved the game. Rowena went down to the cells to tell Blaise herself.

'You're gonna what?' he shouted at her, after hearing the plan.

'Just calm down,' said Rowena, shushing him. 'There's more to it. I'm going to place a Portkey behind one of the grave stones; all you have to do is go straight to it.'

'What about the other Death Eaters?' he asked.

'I'll send them in a different direction but make sure be quick. I don't want this to go badly.'

'Who else knows?'

Rowena frowned in confusion. 'What do you mean?'

'Does anyone else know you're doing this?'

'No,' said Rowena quietly.

She looked towards the cell door but no one was there. She had locked it and placed a strong silencing charm over the room, but she still felt a little paranoid. She knew her father could find things out easily but could there be a reason he wouldn't trust her? She thought it through. The only thing she could think of was that she hadn't killed Blaise yet, so why now?

'Good,' said Blaise quietly.

Rowena knew he was in pain. She really wanted to help but it would have to wait until later tonight. When she left the cells and went back up into the drawing room, she made her no-one saw her.

When Snape returned to Grimmauld Place, everyone was in the living-room, waiting for him. Sirius had complained about being stuck in the kitchen for every meeting, so now they held some in other rooms, which were large enough to hold everyone comfortably.

Snape entered the living room and looked around. Everyone really was here. It was Dumbledore that addressed him first. Everyone else just stared up at him, waiting.

‘What do you have for us, Severus?’ Dumbledore asked in a pleasant tone.

Snape looked to Harry Potter, his black eyes looking over the insolent boy. He was technically a man but Snape would never see it. Harry shifted in his seat but he stared back, unfazed by Snape’s gaze.

‘The Dark Lord, his daughter and his followers will be at the graveyard tonight,’ he said confidently.

‘For what?’ asked Remus.

‘I’m getting to it, Lupin,’ snapped Snape. ‘Rowena has planned a man-hunt game for them tonight. The Dark Lord has kept Blaise alive, he wants Rowena to kill him and only she is allowed to do it. I don’t think she’s able to do it with everyone watching, so she turned it into a game.’

‘Why with the Death Eaters?’ asked Hermione, frowning faintly.

‘She said the rule was that if a Death Eater catches Blaise then they start again. The object of the game is for Rowena to capture and kill Blaise.’

‘Do you think she will?’ asked Dumbledore.

Snape shrugged. ‘I don’t know. It’s taken her this long to even come close to killing him. I don’t know why she has suddenly changed her mind about doing it.’



There was a long pause. 'By your appearance here Potter, I take it that the Horcrux's are gone?'

'Yes,' said Harry clearly.

'Are you sure?'

'Yes,' repeated Harry, his eyes burning with hatred. 'We will go tonight and finish this. Voldemort is almost mortal once more. All we need is the snake, but it has to be done in person.'

'Good,' said Dumbledore cheerfully.

No one else in the room shared the same enthusiasm about the night ahead. They were all facing death and it scared them.

When the meeting ended, Remus and Tonks went straight home to be with their son, who was now almost eighteen months old. It could be their last chance with him. Sirius returned upstairs to his mother's room and Buckbeak and Harry and friends spent the rest of the time that day together. They all knew it could end here.

## Chapter Twenty-One – Revelations

Lord Voldemort, his daughter and all the Death Eaters made their way to the very edge of the graveyard. It was a cool night and there were no clouds in the sky. The stars twinkled brightly. Rowena looked around. The trees that she could see were not moving. Everything was still and quiet.

At the edge of the graveyard, everyone stopped. Rowena looked to her father. He was looking into the distance at the gravestones of his grandparents and father. Rowena looked away. She glanced directly behind her at Walden. His wand was already out and his face looked as though it had been set in stone.

Rowena was nervous for tonight. She had placed the Portkey, which was in the form of a broken comb, behind a large statue of a woman, brandishing a knife; it was one that Rowena conjured up herself. It was odd looking but she was still proud of herself. She placed the Portkey out of sight behind it and she told Blaise precisely where it was. She was going to send the Death Eaters in the opposite direction to give Blaise the best chance.

Some Death Eaters were wearing masks and some weren't. Rowena wondered why they bothered when most of their identities were known anyway. For this occasion, Rowena had donned Death Eater robes, though she didn't feel as though they were much different to any other robes, minus the extra inside pockets and large hood at the back.

They had been standing there for a few minutes and it was still quiet. Rowena sighed quietly as she looked up at the sky. The moon was half full. She turned and looked at Greyback, who was looking at the moon also. She then looked towards Blaise, who was kneeling on the ground, blindfolded and being held by Bellatrix Lestrange, Rowena kind of felt sorry that Blaise was being held by her and not someone else.

Eventually, Voldemort spoke. 'It is time,' he said clearly, so that everyone could hear him. 'Tonight, we shall set Blaise free.... for a few minutes.'

Laughter went around the circle of Death Eaters. Rowena did not join in. She turned away and hid her face. She heard a small whimper from Blaise, but she didn't dare look at him. Voldemort approached Rowena and stood in front of her.

'Are you ready, my dear?'

Rowena looked up into his scarlet eyes and nodded firmly. 'Yes, I am ready.'

'Good,' he hissed lightly. 'Bring Blaise forwards.'

Bellatrix smirked with glee as she moved beside Voldemort, dragging Blaise with her. Blaise muffled a small sob and Bella cackled with glee. 'Release him,' said Voldemort quietly.

Bella did as she was told and she untied Blaise and removed his blindfold. She then pushed him backwards.

'Run,' said Voldemort quietly.

'Boo!'

Blaise stumbled backwards and falling on to his behind. The Death Eaters roared with laughter once more. As Rowena was standing at the front it wasn't hard for her to show Blaise where to go. She pointed to her left and Blaise subtly looked without showing that he was looking at Rowena.

He continued to panic and kept thinking that someone was going to pull out a wand and fire the killing curse at him, even though Rowena promised it wouldn't happen. Voldemort didn't think anyone was going to be able to escape from here without help, that's why he let Rowena have this game.

Once Blaise could no longer be seen Voldemort finally let his eager Death Eaters out and they all ran forwards, Rowena ahead of the group. She started to slow down and Rowena turned her head as she heard a small noise, like a twig breaking.

‘Look over there,’ she whispered.

Half of the group behind her walked in the direction that she pointed and the others followed her until she stopped again and she pointed in front of her. ‘Go down there.’

‘And where are you going?’ asked Walden frowning.

She pointed to the left side. ‘I’m going to over there, alone.’

‘But-’

‘No buts, I’m going over there alone. This is supposed to be my capture and I’m guessing he went this way. Now, go over there,’ she said pointing ahead of her.

Walden gave her an unimpressed look but he obeyed her order. He followed the others down the middle path and Rowena veered to the left. When she was sure she was no longer being watched she ran down the path and when she reached the statue she looked around it. The Portkey was still there.

Fear crept down Rowena’s spine. Had Blaise gone the wrong way? Did someone capture him already? She looked up but nothing had been signalled. She frowned. She couldn’t understand what had happened. Rowena heard a small rustling near where she was standing. She looked but saw nothing.

She decided to move and hide behind the statue. Rowena thought she had waited at least an hour before someone else arrived. She immediately knew it was Blaise. The person was panting and moving frantically. Rowena poked her head around and Blaise almost screamed at seeing her. Rowena rolled her eyes and gestured for him to come over.

Though they didn’t remain alone for long, a Death Eater came into view. It must have been why Blaise was late. He had been chased by someone. Rowena instantly knew the person was Walden. She came out and stood between them. Walden’s face turned to shock.

‘What are you doing?’ he asked loudly.

‘Be quiet!’ said Rowena, shushing him quickly. She couldn’t afford for anyone else to hear them right now.

‘Then tell me what you're doing, why haven’t you killed him yet.’

‘Because I don’t plan to,’ said Rowena calmly.

‘What?’ asked Walden, perplexed.

‘Haven't you wondered why I didn’t kill him before? Why I waited so long to do anything?’ asked Rowena quickly, she felt almost out of breath. ‘I don’t want to kill him. I think he has been through enough and it’s time to end this.’

‘I can't go along with this,’ said Walden tightly.

‘You must,’ said Rowena. ‘You have a job to protect me and by keeping this secret, you will be doing your job.’

Rowena knew what she had said worked. It made Walden think about his choice and what he had been asked. Voldemort did tell Walden to protect his daughter at all costs and he never said that it didn’t include not protecting her from him and the other Death Eaters.

Walden’s jaw hardened. At the moment, he seemed unable to make a decision but Rowena needed one quickly. With her body, she showed him that he needed to make one, and it had to be right now. Walden still seemed torn.

But eventually he came round and said, ‘Alright, fine. But I don’t want this to happen again. How do you plan on getting him out of here.’

‘Put your wand down,’ said Rowena cautiously.

Walden did and Rowena moved out from between them and back behind the statue. She picked up the broken comb and handed it to Blaise. ‘You're lucky I gave this thing twenty-four hours to go off.’

'We have to wait that long?' asked Blaise worriedly.

'No, if you're touching it long enough it will activate and count down. Give it a few minutes.'

They found out that Rowena had been correct. After six minutes the broken comb shook one and within another few seconds, Blaise was gone. Rowena and Walden looked at each other. She opened her mouth but never got time to say anything as someone else shouted.

'Stupefy!'

The spell missed both Rowena and Walden but it caught their attention. It was Snape. Walden frowned and raised his wand. Just then, several cracks whipped through the silent air and many shouts and yells went out.

'What's going on?' asked Rowena, looking at Snape.

Snape's lip curled but it was Walden who spoke. 'He's betrayed us, you bastard!' he shouted angrily.

He went for Snape. They both raised their wands and shouted at the same time, but Snape's spell hit Walden in the chest and he fell to the ground. He was still. Rowena looked to him. He was alright, wasn't he?

She then looked at Snape, who quickly turned to Rowena. He sent a disarming spell but she blocked it silently. He sent another one which Rowena blocked again. Snape then tried a stunning spell but she blocked that one too. Rowena casually wondered how long they were going to do this. They could both do Legilimency and Occlumency, it was like fighting a brick wall.

When Rowena knew Snape was concentrating on something else, she casually flicked her wand, the spell hit his arms, cutting to the material and skin, but it wasn't deep. Snape gasped and looked towards it. Rowena took that opportunity and ran.

She thought she could hear Snape chasing her but the sound was eventually drowned out by voices talking and firing spells and curses. Rowena slowed down to a walk and made her closer to the talking voices. She eventually recognised one of them to be Albus. What was he doing here?

She walked through some thick trees and came into the clearing. A few heads turned her way and Bella moved to her side. 'Where is Walden,' she hissed anxiously.

'He was attacked by Snape, I don't know if he's alive,' she replied.

'I'll protect you then,' said Bella.

Rowena wasn't sure whether it was good or bad thing but she was happy at least one of them decided to since Walden could not be seen. Rowena walked over to her father, who was holding a shield charm between him and the Order. When he saw Rowena, he leered and looked back at Dumbledore, who had now noticed Rowena as well.

'Rowena...' Albus whispered inaudibly.

She looked different to him, though Rowena had noticed no change. She barely looked herself in the mirror anymore.

'Hello, Albus,' said Rowena in mock tone. 'How are Hogwarts and Harry going?'

'Please.....'

She looked at Albus in surprise. Was he pleading with her? It didn't take Harry long to join Dumbledore's side and Rowena couldn't help but roll her eyes. It was so predictable. She looked at Remus. He's eyes were narrowed at her, and she could feel anger radiating off him. She then looked to Sirius. He wasn't looking back. He had his focus on Snape, maybe from surprise that they really were on the same side after all.

'Want her back?' asked Voldemort mockingly.

'You don't care about her, Tom,' said Albus softly.

'You know nothing then, Dumbledore,' said Voldemort. 'You didn't care about her. You wanted to keep her from me and her mother, which surprised me. Her mother was a nice person, wasn't she Dumbledore?'

Albus' face turned solemn. Rowena knew Albus wasn't happy right now. His blue eyes weren't twinkling, they were dull and serious. Rowena didn't like that look. She knew it meant trouble.

'What do you know of her mother?' asked Albus.

'Did you forget?' asked Voldemort. 'I raped her mother. I made her suffer. I knew she was pregnant. Do you really think someone would escape and I would not know about it. Do not be daft. I know everything that goes on under my command. I didn't plan on her mother being murdered though....'

Voldemort drifted off and it sounded like he was talking more to himself than Dumbledore at the end. Albus looked curious about something. 'You murdered her mother?' he asked uncertainly.

'No,' said Voldemort coolly. 'But it is amazing how alike Rowena and I are.'

Albus didn't know what he was talking about. His eyes looked between Voldemort and Rowena, though he didn't seem to understand. Voldemort laughed, it was cold and high. His voice echoed the cemetery. Some Death Eaters chuckled along quietly but some looked around nervously, they didn't know what to do.

'My lovely daughter saw the end to her mother, bloody though it was,' said Voldemort.

Albus looked at Rowena, who was now wishing the ground would open up and swallow her whole. She didn't want Albus to find out at all, let alone in this way. Rowena nudged her father and she shook her head subtly at him.



‘What’s wrong, my dear? You should be proud of what you have done, not ashamed of it,’ said Voldemort. ‘By the way, where is Blaise?’

‘He’s gone,’ said Rowena with confidence.

‘Good,’ hissed Voldemort, a small smile appearing on his face. ‘Now, old man, it’s time to get rid of you.’

‘Not so fast, Riddle,’ shouted Harry, who was still next to Albus. Harry looked angry, angrier than Rowena had ever seen him. His green eyes flashed with heat and his hand around his wand had turned ghostly white.

‘What is it, Potter?’ asked Voldemort lightly. ‘Have something to say?’

‘Where’s your snake?’ asked Harry in a triumphant voice.

For the first time, Rowena saw her father’s face light up with fear. She didn’t understand what Nagini had to do with this though. Was Nagini really more than just a snake or was she missing something else that was important?

While still holding the shield charm in place, Voldemort looked around. Nagini could not be seen. Harry knew where to look though. ‘Over there, Riddle,’ he said, pointing upwards.

Everyone looked where Harry was pointing and they saw Order members Moody, Kingsley, Arthur and Bill, who were looking, held the snake still, though it tried to wriggle from their grasp. Voldemort’s face contorted into rage and his scarlet eyes flashed with anger.

‘How dare you, you old fool and little brat,’ he said to Albus and Harry.

Rowena didn’t know what to make of it. A small part of her was hoping that they were going to kill it. It was more than the snake deserved. She continued to watch with everyone else. Moody held his wand high into the air and slashed the snake’s neck. Blood spurt out from all sides and everyone holding the snake let go and they

backed away from the mess. Their robes all stained in some of the blood.

‘NOOOOOOOOO,’ cried Voldemort.

Rowena had jumped slightly and she took a few steps backwards. She knew her father was angry right now and she didn’t want to be the one in the crossroads. The Order was not finished with her father.

‘You are now mortal once again, Riddle,’ said Harry loudly. ‘All of your Horcrux’s are gone.’

Rowena looked at her father in shock. Was that the reason he looked like he did? Rowena knew perfectly well what a Horcrux was; they had learnt it at Durmstrang. Sevnik told them it was splitting your soul and hiding it in an object but to do it you must commit the worst act, murder.

The part Rowena was most surprised by was when Harry said “all” of his Horcrux’s were gone. Rowena had thought it bad enough to split your soul once, but to do it more seems excessive and unnecessary. Could the body handle that?

Rowena held onto her wand more firmly and she waited for things to explode. She knew her father wasn't going to take this. He would look for revenge now and Rowena was sure that she was going to have to fight as well.

The Order members that killed Nagini now came down and joined the rest of their group. Rowena watched them. She didn’t want this to happen. People were about to die and everyone seemed willing to let it happen. She looked around quickly, Walden was still not here. Rowena really hoped that he hadn’t been killed.

‘Want to know how we got here, Riddle?’ asked Harry.

‘How dare y-’

‘It was all thanks to your follower Severus Snape. He was a member of the Order and a spy for us. He was never on your side.’

'It does not matter now,' said Voldemort, gaining a little of his composure. 'He will be dealt with, as will you.'

'I don't think so,' said Harry assertively.

Rowena watched the exchange. She took a few more steps back and Bella followed her. 'You'll be alright,' Bella whispered to her. It didn't make her feel any better. She knew Bella was capable and very skilled but Rowena didn't want this to happen at all.

She looked around. Most of the Death Eaters weren't sure of what to do either. And when told about the Horcrux's some seemed quite shocked and some appeared confused, not knowing what they are. Rowena wished he didn't know. It seemed like a horrible thing to do to yourself. There had to be a better way to live forever.

The shield charm separating the groups seemed too shaken. Rowena wondered if her father was losing control over the situation. The Death Eaters took out their wands as well; they could sense what was coming. The Order members all took out their wands too and held them at the ready.

The shield charm broke and the battle began with both sides running to each other, spells and curses flying in all directions. Bella, without hesitation, covered Rowena and deflected everything that came at them. Rowena looked over at her father, who was duelling with Snape and McGonagall. She wondered where Albus had gotten too.

'We need to find Walden,' Rowena shouted to Bella.

She understood clearly and they both ran towards the thick of the trees. Once inside, they had disappeared from everyone else. Rowena walked ahead and she wasn't so sure if she wanted Bella walking behind her. She knew Bella didn't particularly like her and she was sure she had a good reason why.

The grass was becoming higher and thicker. Rowena didn't remember it being like this before. Though, she just ran through it without really paying attention to much. Rowena eventually

remembered where to go and in a small clearing they saw a body lying on the ground. Rowena knew it was Walden. He was still lying in the same position.

She walked over quickly and felt his neck before looking up at Bella. 'He's alive,' she said happily. 'We have to take him back to the house.'

Bella quickly conjured up a stretcher and placed Walden upon it but before they got anywhere a voice was heard. 'I don't think you're going anywhere.'

Three Order members ran in front of them, blocking their path. It was Moody, Fred and Sirius. Rowena didn't want to see Sirius right now. He looked at her in anger but she knew he also wanted to question her.

'Why do this?' he asked silently.

Behind her, Bella cackled. 'My dear cousin, do you really think the Dark Lord's daughter would be on your side? She's too good for that. The old fool thought he could keep her away and teach to not be evil but you can't change who she is. And I won't let that happen.'

'Keep out of it, Bella,' said Sirius heatedly.

Rowena held her wand and she tried to keep it steady, her hand was shaky. She wasn't made for battle and war. The first spell came from Moody and Bella blocked it easily. She seemed more than delighted to get drawn into battle. Bella ran to the side and both Moody and Sirius followed her. Rowena was surprised but happy Bella drew them away from her. She was now faced with Fred Weasley.

'You can walk away now,' said Rowena quietly.

'You're not getting out of this,' said Fred.

'I'm not trying to. I know this is going to happen one way or another. I'm just saying that you could walk away right now and fight someone else.'

'Bellatrix won't be back,' said Fred, confidently.

He then threw a disarming spell at Rowena but she blocked it. Did Fred really expect something like that to work? Then came a stunning spell, which didn't work either. Fred seemed confused but he kept trying. He sent a trip jinx and banishing charm but neither worked. Why didn't he know what was going on?

The next spell Fred tried was non-verbal but Rowena managed to block that one as well. It was obvious that Fred was becoming annoyed. 'How are you doing that?'

'Legilimency,' she replied. 'You're making this easy for me.'

'Then kill me,' said Fred, loudly.

'I don't want to,' said Rowena quietly. 'Impedimenta!'

The sudden use of a spell surprised Fred and he was blown off his feet and landed twelve feet away from where he had been standing before. He had dropped his wand but it wasn't far from his body. The spell continued to have an effect and Rowena looked around until she noticed Fred beginning to move.

She held her wand at the ready. Fred seemed to be coming more confused by the minute. He kept wondering why Rowena wasn't just going to kill him. Did she really not want to? It didn't sound like someone who would kill someone for not wanting to join her father and someone that wasn't afraid to attack people to escape from something she had done wrong.

It didn't take long for Fred to regain himself and he began to try again. He tried many of the same spells but the last one surprised Rowena.

'Crucio!' shouted Fred.

This time the spell hit Rowena and she fell to the ground in pain. Once it was lifted she raised her body but felt unable to do more. She

saw Fred move out of the corner of her eye. She knew she had to move. Fred raised his arm.

‘Impedimenta!’ he shouted.

‘Protego!’ Rowena shouted almost instantly.

The shield deflected the spell, but Rowena began to shake a little more. She definitely didn’t see that one coming. Fred was angry, well, it seemed more than angry, like rage. Rowena wondered if she was going to have to fight back but it ended when another person joined the scene.

‘Avada Kedavra!’

It was Bella. She had returned from duelling with Moody and Sirius. Rowena wonder what happened. Were the other two still alive? Rowena put her wand down and the shield charm broke. She went to Fred’s side. She could tell he was dead just by looking at him. She hung her head but she was brought back by Bella, who grabbed her and started running.

‘What about Walden?’ asked Rowena, who was quickly running out of breath.

‘He’s behind us,’ shouted Bella.

Rowena looked behind her and sure enough, Walden was still unconscious and lying on the stretcher and it was chasing after them. As they continued to run, Rowena noticed how far the battle had spread in such a small amount of time. She saw Remus duelling with Rookwood, Hermione and Luna duelling with Travers and Bill and Charlie duelling with Rabastan Lestranger.

Rowena and Bella moved fast through the graveyard. Rowena knew if they were caught or seen by too many it wouldn’t be good. They could all go after them or make too many of them leave and chase them, they couldn’t afford for that to happen right now.

After running for another few minutes, Rowena thought it was taking too long. The longer they kept running the further away the house appeared to be. Rowena thought it was much closer than this, but in this type of situation it seemed nothing would be made easy for them. Rowena's feelings now on the battle were bad. She knew there was a good chance that it wasn't going to end well.

When they made it to the house, Rowena placed Walden in her bed chambers. No one would be able to enter with him or her, so she knew it would be safe. She went back into the hallway. Bella was leaning against the wall but pushed herself off when Rowena came out.

'You should stay there,' said Bella. 'We can handle things outside.'

'No,' said Rowena firmly. 'I'm coming too.'

Together, they went downstairs and the wall next to them blasted into many pieces. It surprised them both. Bella jumped down the remaining steps and ran after the person responsible. Rowena didn't see who it was since it happened so fast. Rowena made her way down the steps and she felt herself dragged into the living room.

She yelped and when she managed to look round, she noticed it was Voldemort holding her. They were soon joined by Albus and Harry who came running into the room. Rowena cocked an eyebrow. She didn't know Albus could move so fast. Voldemort held Rowena in front of him while holding his wand out.

'Let her go, Tom,' said Albus calmly. 'You don't want to hurt your only daughter.'

'She wasn't supposed to live this far,' said Voldemort viciously.

Rowena frowned and she suddenly struggled in his tight grip. She wrenched herself free and stood between him and Albus. Her eyes suddenly filled with tears. Had all of this been for nothing? Was she here for another purpose without realising it?

For a second, Voldemort's face softened but it definitely didn't last. Rowena didn't understand what her father meant by it. Why wasn't she supposed to live? She wanted an answer and if he was killed now it would do Rowena no good.

'My dear,' said Voldemort softly. 'I only mean-'

'No,' said Rowena loudly. 'Tell me what you really intended!'

Voldemort's face tauten even more, if that were possible. His thin lips were so far stretched they almost seemed as though they had disappeared. His face seemed whiter than normal and his scarlet eyes were glowing brighter than ever.

'My dear,' he whispered. Rowena could barely hear him. 'I never meant for any harm to come to you but you must realise I never wanted children and I still don't. You being here has been useful I will admit but you're now no longer needed.'

'What did you use me for?' she asked, frowning.

'To get inside the Order. I knew there was a chance that Severus would betray me. It was good to have you here. Not many people know Dumbledore as well as you-'

Rowena cut in. 'But I don't know much about Albus. I lived with him and he raised me, yes, but I still don't know anything about him. I know nothing of his past, nothing of his childhood, not even much about his family.'

'That is true,' agreed Voldemort. 'But you know things in the present time and that's what has counted so far.'

Rowena frowned heavier. 'I don't understand,' she said quietly.

'You knew when the Order would attack. You knew the members and you knew where Albus would not look to find us,' said Voldemort.

The more Rowena thought about it, the more she realised that he was right. He had used her. She always told him what he wanted to



know without any hesitation, without even giving it any thought. She couldn't think why she hadn't noticed this before. She thought they had been working together.

How could she have been so foolish?

She looked up at her father and she saw something she didn't see before, a monster. That's exactly what he was and she was just like him. So what did that make her, a monster as well?

Suddenly, Rowena felt sick to her stomach. She looked at her father again and tears stung the back of her eyes. She had betrayed so many people. She had wiped her trust with Albus away. She no longer knew what she wanted. She turned her head and looked at Albus, his bright blue eyes fixed on her.

The guilt and shame washed over her like a tidal wave. She didn't want this. She took one step closer to Albus before changing her mind and stepping back to the very middle of them. She could feel her body turn cold and she shivered to herself. What was going to happen now? She knew it was now impossible for her to return to the life she once had. Maybe it hadn't been so bad after all.

After a long moment, Rowena heard a small whisper behind her. She didn't hear what was said and she wasn't sure she wanted to. It felt like hours had passed and yet Rowena knew it had only been a few minutes.

'You need to stand aside,' said Albus softly.

'And what? Let you kill him?' said Rowena hastily.

She felt angry but she knew it wasn't at Albus. She was angry with herself and the choices she had made up until now. It had all been for nothing. It no longer mattered. What would she do if it all ended here? Would she leave unharmed or be captured? Rowena thought the most likely thing to happen was the latter.

With much hesitation and uncertainty Rowena slowly moved to the side and she moved out of the way quickly. There was a large flash of

white light and Rowena was thrown across the room, landing near the entrance to the room. She laid on her side and twisted her body so she could see what was happening.

Albus had pushed Harry to the side as well and casted a large flash of light, while Harry kept his composure and stance and casted the one spell she never thought would leave his lips.

‘Avada Kedavra!’

The white light disappeared and was replaced with a green one. It engulfed Voldemort and throw him back into the air. When his back hit the wall, Rowena cried out in agony. She had made a mistake. She chose the wrong side and now it was done. Voldemort’s body then fell to the ground with a sickening crack. Rowena’s eyes closed tightly from the sound. It made her stomach turn.

When Rowena re-opened her eyes she saw Harry approach her father’s body while Albus looked on. He seemed exhausted as though the battle had gone on for a thousand years. Harry placed two fingers at the side of Voldemort’s neck and after a few moments, he exhaled with relief.

‘It’s over.’

Before Albus and Harry could turn their attentions to Rowena, she had fled the house. When she reached the edge of the graveyard she flew her arm into the air.

‘Morsmordre!’ she screamed.

A bang echoed the night sky and the velvet blanket turned into a green one. The Dark Mark floated high above everyone. The snake swathed the skull and as Rowena looked at it as a single tear ran down her cheek.

She turned back to the Riddle house and saw Albus and Harry leaving it, running towards her location at a great speed. Panic rushed through Rowena’s chest and she ran down towards the statue

she had created before. There was no other Portkey but she needed a place to disappear without being caught.

'Retreat!' said Rowena, screaming at the top of her lungs.

She knew her voice must have been heard as she heard shouting and many of the duellings stopped though Rowena saw no one on her way to the odd statue. She held onto her wand firmly and thought of any one place quickly. She just needed to leave. She waved her wand and with a small pop she was gone.

## Chapter Twenty-Two - Aftermath

The Ministry of Magic was one of the few places that no one wanted to be in. It had become like a war zone. Everyone wanted answers to their questions and no one seemed happy with any of the answers that they were getting.

The Order had turned up at the Ministry to see if they could do anything to help. Most of them at the moment were just glad that Voldemort never got the chance to take over the Ministry. It was one of the few places that he wanted to control because controlling the Ministry was one big step closer to control the magical world in Britain.

Tonight, the Atrium was full of important wizards from all over Britain. They all wanted to talk about two things, the death of Voldemort and the rumour surrounding his daughter. Some people now believed she existed and some still thought it was just being put out to scare people. The large space was soon almost full and the noise was becoming unbearable.

After many minutes of all the noise a man stood at the very front of the Atrium and he raised it so he could be seen by everyone. The man was Rufus Scrimgeour. He was a tall man, with a mane of tawny hair that was streaked with grey, bushy eyebrows and keen yellowish eyes which were behind wire-rimmed glasses – his appearance reminded people of an old lion. He had slight limp and at the moment he leaned on his walking stick for support.

It took a while for the crowd the notice that the Minister of Magic was standing on the raised platform, waiting for everyone to stop their talking and yelling and listen to what he had to say. He looked around at the people before him. Many of them he knew and most he did not want to disappoint.

‘Colleagues and friends hear me,’ said Scrimgeour loudly.

The noise of everyone stopped and the Atrium turned deathly quiet. Nothing could be heard. Scrimgeour cleared his throat. ‘I believe the time has come to tell everyone the truth of what has been happening. Albus Dumbledore, Headmaster of Hogwarts, has come to explain

things too as he and many of his friends were there the night Lord Voldemort was killed.'

He paused. 'Yes, Lord Voldemort is dead!' he said loudly, his voice echoing the room. Most people in the Atrium cheered and applauded at the news but Scrimgeour was not finished. 'But there is more to tell.'

He paused again as he waited for the cheering to cease. 'I have spoken to Dumbledore and his allies and they believe that it is not over. They have told me about a woman, who is the Dark Lord's daughter.'

This statement cause more people to call out but Scrimgeour managed to quiet them long enough to say the next thing. 'Her name is Rowena Riddle and she is considered as dangerous as her father was.'

'What do you all plan on doing about it then?' shouted a large man near the back of the Atrium.

Scrimgeour appeared ready for answers. Many of the press were there, taking notes and scribbling quickly to make sure nothing was missed in their notes.

'We are planning to form a group to fight against Lord Voldemort's daughter,' said Scrimgeour. 'And Dumbledore will be leading this group. They will be added to the group he has already created called the Order of the Phoenix. People who are able and willing to join should.'

'You call that planning when one has already been formed?' yelled a stout looking woman in the front row. Many people cheered along with her, agreeing. 'What have you been doing the rest of the time? Waiting for her to come to you?' the woman shouted next.

The angry shouting began again and it seemed as though Scrimgeour was losing control of the situation but it seemed that Dumbledore had something else in mind. They had been able to rid

of Voldemort and now another danger was threatening to rise in his place. Dumbledore knew they couldn't let it come to that.

He and many others had waited so long for Voldemort to die and it finally happened and he was angry that it hadn't ended there. At first, he thought he had convinced Rowena to change her mind but it seemed she had a change of heart of her own. Dumbledore knew he could no longer stand by and he was becoming increasingly frustrated with people who wanted the issue resolved but were unwilling to do anything themselves.

Dumbledore created a platform and moved it upwards as well. He placed his wand to his neck and whispered, 'Sonorus.'

'SILENCE!' Dumbledore shouted.

The spell he had used at his throat was to make his voice louder; his voice had echoed the room twice over. It was much better than yelling and straining his voice just to get people to listen. He took the spell effects off his throat since it seemed to have worked. Everyone in the room went deathly silent again and they all seemed too scared to say anything more.

He removed the spell. 'Please, you must listen. We knew no-one was willing to help fight Voldemort but this is his daughter we are talking about,' said Dumbledore, his voice still powerful. 'His daughter does have his talent but they are not as strong and we must not let them reach that level, otherwise, she may create the same havoc as her father, or worse.'

A few whispers went around the room but no one shouted and Dumbledore took it as a good sign. People looked around at each other but it didn't take long for people to turn their attentions back to Dumbledore, who waited patiently. This is what he was waiting for and this was what they needed right now.

Wizards and witches in this country now need to stand together and fight as one against the threat that could become worse than the last one. Dumbledore just wished there was an easier way for them all to see what the possible future could be.

He said what had to be said. 'It is time for people to stand together. We all need to-'

It seemed that not everyone was convinced. 'What do you expect all of us normal people to do?' asked a small, skinny man who was standing to the side of the Atrium. He looked at Dumbledore with narrowed, untrusting eyes. This man wasn't prepared to trust Dumbledore on anything right now.

'And what would you prefer to happen?' asked Dumbledore, looking at the small man with interest.

'You're the great Dumbledore,' said the man, his eyes almost popping out of his head. 'Why don't you find and duel her. If she isn't at her full potential yet than I suppose it should be no problem for you.'

Many roars went up, agreeing with the small man, who was still looking at Dumbledore. He was angry and he couldn't understand what Dumbledore expected everyone else to do about it. He was arguably the greatest wizards of the modern time, so why didn't he just do it himself?

'I understand what you mean but this threat is not just facing me,' said Dumbledore calmly.

'Yeah and neither did Grindelwald and yet you still went after him,' the small man retorted. 'Grindelwald wasn't even attacking Britain, he wasn't even close and yet you and fought him. This is no different and yet this time the person is in Britain and for some reason you're refusing to meet her in a duel.'

Dumbledore sighed to himself. There was a good reason why he was refusing to meet Rowena in person. He didn't want to duel her. He would be too much for her. The last thing he wanted to do was hurt her. She needed to be stopped before it was too late, not killed. It wasn't a fate she had brought upon herself. Rowena had been dragged into this from her father, thought Dumbledore knew Rowena had chosen to go back to him.

'Rowena, Voldemort's daughter, has not attacked anyone. She only disappeared three weeks ago and nothing has been heard from her since,' said Dumbledore. 'We are only looking to capture her not kill her.'

He paused and looked around the room. He needed a way to finish this session. 'I trust that anyone with information will contact the Ministry and the local authorities.'

The platform went down and Dumbledore stride from the room with speed. He could hear the angry voices behind him but he was in no mood for this. His face was grim and the Order followed him on the way out.

Scrimgeour could be heard trying to speak and calm people down but it seemed not even his demeanour could stop people from expressing how they feel about this. He was eventually drowned out and he decided to leave it for another day.

At Grimmauld Place some members were waiting for Dumbledore and company to return. The kitchen was quiet and it seemed that nobody was in the mood to talk about anything. Sirius was leaning back in his chair, Hermione was resting her head on her arms which were lying on the table, Ron and George were sitting next to each other not speak.

Ginny was sitting quietly, looking at the floor, Bill, Charlie and Percy sat together playing a game of cards and Tonks held Teddy in her arms, rocking him gently. The room was quiet and as the day wore on it became dark.

Sirius fell forward on his chair and then lightened the room with his wand. Most of the other members were at the Ministry with Dumbledore. Sirius was surprised that Harry wanted to be there. Harry didn't like the Ministry but they all knew that everyone had to work together if they were going to achieve anything.

'Where's Fleur?' asked Sirius.



He was looking at Bill who looked up from the game. 'She went to Gringotts to see if she could help.'

'Why didn't you go?' asked Tonks, stroking Teddy's now dark green hair.

'Well, they don't have much use for curse-breakers at the moment,' he said quietly. 'Though I don't think anyone's thinking about work anymore.'

'We all thought it would be over,' said Hermione softly. 'But it's not. Rowena is out there, waiting for us.'

'She's not waiting,' said Sirius bitterly. 'She's biding her time. She doesn't know what to do. Her father was killed and the Death Eaters have disbanded, though more of them got away than we thought. Rowena has nowhere left to go.'

'What if she leaves the country?' asked Ginny.

'She can't,' replied Percy. 'We've made sure. At the Ministry we have placed a large border around the whole country. She won't be able to leave even by disapparating.'

'It still won't be easy to find her though,' said Ginny looking around.

'No, it won't,' agreed Charlie. 'But at least she's confined to one country. It could be worse, she could be anywhere in the world.'

'What if she got out of the country before the spell went around?' asked Ron sullenly.

'It is possible,' said Percy honestly. 'But the chances are slim that she did. She would've had to have left pretty quick.'

The room went silent again. Nothing could be heard except for rhythmic breathing. It was Hermione that broke the silence. 'Do you think she killed Blaise?'

'Would it matter?' asked Ron bitterly.

A lot of people turned to look at Ron in surprise. His tone was unusually cold but Ron just shrugged. 'Well, he was a Slytherin and-'

'That doesn't make his life worth less than ours,' said Bill firmly.

'He never gave us any trouble,' said Hermione. 'I know he wasn't fond of anyone that wasn't in Slytherin but it doesn't mean he was a bad person. I prefer him than Draco any day.'

'I suppose it's possible that he escaped...' said Sirius, thinking hard. 'I mean, Rowena said he was gone, she didn't actually stated that he was dead. It doesn't mean that she killed him.'

'Wouldn't he have surfaced by now though?' said Charlie. 'I mean, it's been three weeks, surely someone would have seen him.'

'Maybe he left the country,' said Bill quickly. 'Or maybe, he went home and is hiding or maybe he's just hiding somewhere else. I don't think he wants to risk the chance of getting caught again, that's if he's alive of course.'

'But we found no body,' said Hermione anxiously.

'True, but Rowena could have done anything to hide it,' said Sirius.

A few nods went around the table. Sirius couldn't help but sigh in annoyance. What was taking them so long?

'Wait,' said Sirius quickly. 'Is Remus at the Ministry?'

'Yes, but no-one would recognise him,' replied Tonks. 'We disguised him a little, I don't think he likes it but I'm confident that no one would recognise him, unless, Greyback's there maybe.'

'Why would it matter if Greyback was there?' asked Ron, frowning.

'Because he would be able to smell my scent,' said Remus, who was now walking into the room with Dumbledore and many other members. They joined the others at the table and looked around.

Everyone seemed to notice that Dumbledore didn't look happy. Even Harry looked a little worse for wear.

Ginny moved from her chair and sat beside Harry but he shot up out of his chair left the kitchen, slamming the door behind him. Ginny looked stunned but she decided to follow him. They needed to talk. She needed to know what was going on.

She knocked on Harry's door but he didn't answer. Ginny rolled her eyes and walked through the door. Harry was sitting on his bed, his back to the door. He appeared to be staring at the wall. Ginny walked over and stood at the other side of the bed, looking at Harry's back.

'Harry, what's going on?' she asked gently.

'This isn't working,' Harry replied quietly.

'What isn't work?' asked Ginny, confused.

'Us,' said Harry standing up.

He turned and faced Ginny, who now looked as though she wanted to cry. Harry exhaled irregularly. At this moment he wasn't feeling too good and he knew it was because of everything. It wasn't just Ginny, but this really wasn't working out. They both needed a fresh, new start.

'But... you know how I feel.... you know that... I love you,' said Ginny, eventually.

Harry looked down at the floor. He seemed disappointed with himself. 'I'm sorry. I did love you but things have become complicated and I know that we were good in the beginning but I think we rushed into it.'

'There's someone else, isn't there?'

'No, there isn't,' said Harry firmly, shaking his head. 'I just need some time alone, to think, I don't know. We both need a break. I can't do this anymore.'

Tears filled Ginny's eyes and when Harry noticed he felt worse, but this wasn't like Ginny. She wasn't usually a teary or emotional person. This wasn't what Harry expected to happen. Maybe Ginny had invested many feelings into their relationship but Harry hadn't. They were fine together, in the beginning, but Harry knew this wasn't the woman he was going to end up with and it wasn't because of her looks but he knew Ginny's history.

Some of the guys Ginny had been with didn't last and most of them she broke up with over small and petty things. Harry didn't think this was the type of person he was to be with. He had always thought about asking Cho out again but he knew there was a big chance she would say no. Harry once thought about Hermione, she was definitely more like a sister than anything else.

With much hesitation, Harry left the bedroom and he walked back into the kitchen. Ginny remained in the bedroom.

However, in the kitchen, the conversation continued. 'I don't understand,' said Hermione slowly.

Remus gave her a small smile. 'All werewolves have their own scents,' Remus explained. 'It's usually an indirect scent from the werewolf the bite came from.'

'What if you were born one?' asked Hermione.

'Then, you'd get a variation scent from the parent that gave it to you or a combination of both, if both parents were werewolves.'

'But you once said that your kind don't breed,' said Harry. He had finally settled in the kitchen. Ginny had not yet come down. His thoughts continued to linger on her. It made him wonder why his thoughts didn't linger on her at other times. Why now when he knew he had just hurt her?

'Yes,' said Remus slowly. 'My kind doesn't normally breed but some do. Sometimes the females are raped, sometimes the females just want to have a child of their own, which isn't wrong, but is very unwise.'

‘So, if the mother’s a werewolf, the child definitely will be?’ asked Hermione.

A few people couldn’t understand where all of Hermione’s questions were coming from. Why a sudden interest in werewolves?

Remus chuckled faintly. ‘No, well, if only the father is a werewolf, then the child has a fifty percent chance of being one, and if only the mother is a werewolf, then the child’s chances of being human are slimmer, it becomes a seventy-five percent chance that it will be a werewolf.’

‘But don’t children get genes from both parents?’ asked Sirius, who was frowning.

‘Yes,’ said Remus. ‘But the mother carries the child for nine months and it has more of a chance for infection. The mother can pass it on any time during the pregnancy; it depends on a lot of things.’

Harry watched the conversation with interest but he was surprised that neither Dumbledore nor anyone else interrupted. They allowed the conversation to continue. It appeared that Hermione had more questions.

‘But it’s unlikely that two werewolves would knowingly have a child together, right?’

‘Well, the mother would know, yes,’ replied Remus. ‘But it depends on the person if they keep the child.’

‘Would you?’ asked Harry.

Remus looked towards Harry and frowned. ‘What do you mean?’

‘Is it possible that you’ve been with a female werewolf and she became pregnant but you didn’t know about it?’

Remus appeared stunned by that question. He definitely didn't expect it and he seemed a little reluctant to answer the question. 'I've never been with a female werewolf,' he said quietly.

'But if you haven't taken the Wolfsbane potions, you wouldn't know for sure, would you?'

'No, I suppose not,' said Remus, thinking.

'Is there ever sexual experiences between two male werewolves?' asked Sirius with a grin on his face.

That question made Remus blush slightly. 'Again, it depends on the individual but most of the time it would lead to a fight, but there are extenuating circumstances if there ever is sexual contact between two males.'

'Such as...?' asked Ron slowly.

Dumbledore quickly cleared his throat. That conversation had gone on long enough. Dumbledore knew they had things to discuss. He stood up and everyone's eyes turned on him and he waited for it to be absolute quiet before he spoke.

'The Ministry seemed reluctant to help us search for Rowena, so I'm guessing we're on our own,' he started clearly. 'I want it known now by everyone, and I mean everyone...' a small glance went Moody's way, 'that if Rowena is found or cornered that she is not to be killed, captured only. I believe her to more of a danger to herself than anyone else.'

'And if she attacks us, we're supposed to take it lying down?' asked Ron irritably.

Both of Ron's parents shot him a warning look but Dumbledore answered the question. 'No, I expect you to defend yourself without killing her. It is possible. I would also suggest talking to her.'

'What good would that do?' asked Sirius, leaning forwards in his chair. 'I don't think you know her as well as you would like to think.'

'I know her better than anybody in this room, Sirius, do not forget that,' said Dumbledore lightly. 'As I recall, she tricked you into trusting her and she deceived you. She's cleverer than you give her credit for.'

Sirius' face turned sour but he said nothing more. He sunk back into his chair and looked at the table, now just deciding to listen instead. 'I think it's now time to think of things that could be done to help stop Rowena before anything major happens,' started Dumbledore.

The meeting went on for another couple of hours. Afterwards, most people went home, including Remus and Tonks with their son. Remus went in first and checked the place over and let Tonks in when he knew it was safe.

Tonks went straight upstairs and put Teddy to bed. He fell asleep quickly. Remus remained downstairs and he went into the kitchen and made a pot of tea. While he waited for the kettle to boil he watched it. He knew he could use his wand, but what was the point? It wouldn't take long. He sighed and ran a hand over his tired face, rubbing it gently.

It wasn't long before Tonks joined him in the kitchen and she stood near the door and watched Remus. She had waited a long time to be with him and it took a long time to convince him of her feelings. She loved Remus so much that it hurt.

When he finished making the tea, Remus placed it on a tray and took it into the living room. As he passed Tonks, he didn't look at her. She closed her eyes slowly and took a deep breath before following Remus into the living room.

She brought an armchair closer to the coffee table and sat opposite Remus. He finally looked over at her when she sat down. There was a faint frown on his face. He poured them both some tea but Tonks continued to watch Remus. He's changed. It was all that kept going through her mind. Tonks leaned forwards and rested her arms on her knees, clasping her hands together.

'What's going on, Remus?' she asked quietly.

‘With what?’ asked Remus absently.

‘With you,’ she said louder than intended.

Remus’ head snapped up to look at her but he quickly looked away and took a sip of his tea. Once he placed it back down he leaned back into the sofa. Tonks sighed inaudibly. ‘You’ve been acting different lately and I want to know why.’

‘I have changed?’

‘Yes, you have,’ said Tonks firmly. ‘I know we had trouble before, with Teddy, but that’s over now. I thought you were Ok with having a child now, especially since we know Teddy isn’t a werewolf.’

‘He’s still half werewolf,’ said Remus darkly. ‘He just doesn’t have the actual gene, so he won’t transform.’

‘And that’s a good thing,’ said Tonks quickly to Remus’ statement.

‘Yes, but I never wanted children,’ said Remus, now looking at Tonks. ‘You know it could have turned out differently.’

‘I know,’ said Tonks quietly. ‘But it’s over now. We have Teddy and I’m happy about that. I thought you’d be proud to be a father.’

‘I am but it still should never have happened,’ said Remus lightly. ‘We have no idea what he might think when he’s older. You know werewolves are shunned in our world.’

‘I think he’d be proud of you,’ said Tonks firmly. ‘You and I are fighting for his freedom, for him to have the chance to live in a free world, empty of the hatred towards your kind.’

‘Towards my kind,’ repeated Remus.

Tonks smiled at him faintly. ‘You know what I mean.’



It went quiet between them and Tonks finally got to ask what she's wanted to ask for a while. 'Is anything going on with you and Hermione?'

'No,' said Remus calmly. 'Why?'

'She's been looking at you a bit and all those questions about werewolves earlier,' said Tonks quickly. 'It just got me thinking, that's all.'

'She's young,' said Remus. 'And she's intelligent. She likes to learn things. Hermione just had a bad experience with Ron and I was there. That's all.'

Tonks nodded her head slowly. She knew Remus wouldn't cheat but Hermione was young and Remus himself was intelligent. Tonks knew she wasn't the brightest crayon in the pack, but she wasn't stupid.

They went on and finished their tea together before heading off to bed. Remus couldn't shake the guilty feelings that were swelling inside him.

Back at Grimmauld Place, the only two people still in the kitchen was Moody and Kingsley. Sirius had already gone upstairs to bed. Both Aurors were discussing what happened during the meeting. This was one time that Moody didn't agree with what Dumbledore wanted to do.

Moody knew what dark witches and wizards were like, none of them could be trusted. They should all be killed on sight. There's no question to their guilt. Their actions had already confirmed it.

'Voldemort's daughter shouldn't be given a different fate,' said Moody heatedly. 'She's just as bad as he was. She needs to be taught a lesson.'

Kingsley nodded his head as he listened. 'I do think she needs some guidance,' said Kingsley in his soothing, deep voice. 'But I do believe her to be ignorant. She is young. She needs time. Rowena doesn't know what she wants right now. She's confused.'

‘She’s not,’ growled Moody. ‘She’s a danger and it needs to be taken care of.’

‘Albus loves her,’ said Kingsley. ‘He doesn’t want to see her hurt, any more than she already is. I can understand that Albus wants to protect her but he needs to see that she isn’t a child and needs to be brought to justice for her actions.’

‘Lupin didn’t trust her from the start,’ growled Moody. ‘And he turned out to be right about her.’

‘We shall see,’ said Kingsley softly.

At the Burrow, Molly was running around the kitchen, making everyone a late dinner and once it was served she noticed another person was missing.

‘Where’s Harry?’

She was looking towards her only daughter. Ginny looked away quickly and Bill decided to answer for her. ‘He’s not coming. He and Ginny broke up.’

Molly’s face fell heavily in disappointment. She thought everything was fine between Ginny and Harry. She loved Harry like a son and she couldn’t wait for the day when he really would become family.

One look at her daughter and she knew that Ginny didn’t want to talk about it. Though, Molly could not ignore how upset Ginny looked. ‘Where’s Harry staying then?’ she asked lightly.

A few shrugs went around the table. No one knew where Harry was staying. Molly nodded her head and she sat down to eat with everyone else.

‘Is it really safe to stay here?’ asked Fleur half-way through their meal.

A few people looked at her but said nothing. Bill grasped his wife’s hand and gave her a small smile. ‘I’m sure we’ll be fine. The house has been protected. Besides, Rowena isn’t doing anything yet.’

'Yeah, yet,' said George sourly.

It was quiet and Molly looked as though her tears would fall again. They had lost Fred in the battle with Voldemort. She just wished she knew which person killed him. It hurt her more than anything but she hoped Fred was in a better place right now.

They held the funerals a week after the battle. A few Death Eaters had fallen but they were left where they were but the other Order members were taken and given a proper funeral. Molly looked around at her husband and other children. She wished they didn't have to take part in the third war which was to come.

## Chapter Twenty-Three – The New Dark Lord

When the first year anniversary of her father's death went by, Rowena did nothing but cry while holding herself. She was now alone and she didn't know what to do next. It was now the beginning of June and Rowena was now twenty years old, though she sometimes felt older.

For most of the year, she had been living in a cave, in the secluded mountainous area on one border of the country. Rowena tried to disappear once but it didn't work and she was found by the Order, but she managed to get away without being seen. She had been very lucky that day.

She knew she should have left the country as soon as she left but she wanted to wait until the Order had left the graveyard and the house. She wanted some things from her bed chambers. She had expected to see Walden still in there but he had gone. It made her wonder if the Order found a way in.

Though now, Rowena wondered if she shouldn't have bothered going back to the house. It was a great risk, the Order could have set a trap, she was slightly surprised when she realised that they hadn't. Most of the things she retrieved from her room were gone. She had lost many, sold some and some she can't remember what happened. Lately, everything felt like an unreal blur.

Late one afternoon, Rowena jumped up and left the cave in a hurry. She looked around but saw nothing. She could have sworn she had heard something. She frowned and went back into the cave and lay down on the hard floor. It definitely wasn't the most comfortable place to be but Rowena knew it was better than being in a cell in Azkaban or locked up somewhere that she didn't want to be.

The noise came again and echoed through the cave. Rowena remained where she was and closed her eyes. All she could think was that it was the Order, they had found her. It was over. She would now be locked up and never able to see the outside world again but the voice made her question herself.

'My Lord,' the voice said. It was inaudible. Rowena barely heard the voice at all but she opened her eyes. She wasn't Voldemort. That's how the Death Eaters addressed her father. She moved and sat up and turned. There were two cloaked and masked Death Eaters standing in the mouth of the cave, looking in her direction.

Rowena blinked several times in succession, to make sure she wasn't seeing things. Her immediate thought was if they were not wearing those robes. Rowena stood up and she picked up her wand from the floor.

'You won't need it, my Lord.'

She had heard that voice before. She looked them over but she couldn't remember. 'Remove your masks,' she ordered her voice croaky.

They complied instantly. She knew them. It was Rabastan Lestrangle and Antonin Dolohov. She was amazed to see them. They both approached her and knelt at her feet. When Rowena looked down a part of her wanted to cry.

In their faces she could see their surprise about her appearance. It was hard to look after herself when the whole wizarding community was out to get you. Her face had become gaunt and pale from lack of sleep, food and sunlight and her body had become weak and her hair had also suffered, it started falling out and was becoming thick with dirt and blood from all the scratching. She struggled to do normal things, like getting up and down and running killed her breathing. She had never felt so weak before.

She signalled for them to get up and they did. 'What are you doing here?' she asked her eyes wide.

'We all went out to search for you,' said Dolohov. 'We had waited for half a year but we heard nothing about you and had no sign from you, so, Walden got all of us together and we eventually agreed to help find you.'

'What if I'm cau-?'

‘We have somewhere to take you,’ said Dolohov before Rowena could finish her question. ‘We sorted that out as well.’

Rowena looked to Rabastan. He had been quiet. She began to ask herself if he did not agree about her taking her father’s place.

She nodded her head eventually and decided to leave with them. Almost anything would be better than this. They travelled down the mountain and once there Rowena took Dolohov’s arm and they disappeared. Once there, Rowena instantly let go of Dolohov and took a few steps forward. She didn’t know where they were right now.

‘What am I supposed to see?’ she asked, frowning faintly.

She could see nothing but trees and bushes everywhere. Dolohov and Rabastan stepped forwards and Dolohov spoke. ‘We are in the Forest of Glen. It is an out of the way, secluded place, not many people come here, if any. Most of us didn’t know it existed.’

‘And we built a new place,’ said Rabastan quietly.

Dolohov moved closer to Rowena and he whispered into her ear, ‘The new order.’

Rowena then gasped slightly when a manor appeared out of nowhere. She looked at it and moved closer. It was nice looking. The outside was made from solid stone. Rabastan walked over to the door and tapped it with his wand three times. It opened and Rowena followed him inside, Dolohov following from behind.

The very inside there was a long corridor which extended further than Rowena could see. The carpet was black and the walls were grey in colour. There were no windows yet and no decorations on the walls.

They led Rowena straight into the lounge room. It was empty. Rowena looked to Dolohov. He had moved the left sleeve of his shirt and was pressing his wand to the Dark Mark. He noticed Rowena watching.

'It will notify everyone and they should return within minutes,' he explained.

And sure enough, within a few minutes the door to the manor opened and before Rowena saw Bella, she heard her voice yelling in the hallway. 'You better have a good reason for calling us bac-'

They entered the room and Bella's voice failed when she saw her. The Death Eaters came into the room and they all knelt and bowed their heads, Dolohov and Rabastan joined them. As Rowena looked out over all of them she felt embarrassed. What were they doing? She wasn't her father. Did they really want to follow her?

'W-what are you doing?' asked Rowena, after a long stretch of silence.

They rised to their feet in almost perfect unison, 'My Lord,' started Bella. 'We are sure you were your father's number two and we shall honour it. You do take after him after all.'

'Why not pick one of you to lead?' asked Rowena.

'Because it would never work,' replied Bella. 'Sometimes we don't always agree and we have, in past times, turned on each other. We have all come to an agreement that you should lead us.'

Rowena nodded her head slowly. She needed to think about this a little. She looked at the Death Eaters before her. There were a few missing. One of them stood out to her in particular.

'Where's Walden?' she asked clearly.

'Here,' replied Walden.

Rowena's head turned to the entrance of the room and there he was standing. Rowena felt as though it had been a lifetime since she last saw him. He removed his hood and mask. He still looked the same. He gave Rowena a small smile before walking to her feet and kneeling.

‘Get up,’ said Rowena quietly.

Walden obeyed and he stood up and looked down at Rowena, his blue eyes piercing her. Rowena had something to say to him but she wasn't sure how to say it but Walden had something to say as well.

‘I'm sorry. I was supposed to protect you and I failed,’ he said falling to his knees again.

‘Get up,’ repeated Rowena quietly.

Walden obeyed again and Rowena made him look at her. All traces of his previous happiness, smiles and looks were gone, replaced with a solemn look.

‘You did me proud,’ said Rowena firmly. ‘You did what you were supposed to do. Snape threatened us and you stood in front of me, protecting me. I couldn't have asked any more from you. I trust you're feeling better?’

He nodded proudly. ‘Yes, my Lord.’

‘Good. Then you can go back to protecting me,’ she said evenly.

‘Yes, my Lord,’ Walden repeated.

Walden stood to the side and she decided to address the Death Eaters now before getting some rest and some food. They all looked at her expectantly, waiting for something, anything.

‘I want to thank all of you for helping to find me and I am sorry that I fled, but I'm sure you all got yourselves out well enough. Though, I have noticed that some people are not here. Would someone here like to fill me in?’

Before anyone could speak Walden stepped forwards and spoke. ‘My Lord, I believe you should rest first. We could get you some food.’

Rowena looked at him and he retreated slightly but she wasn't angry. It was actually a good idea. She eventually nodded her head slowly.



‘Very well,’ she said. ‘I shall sleep, freshen up and have something to eat and then I suggest we all have a long talk about things.’

All the Death Eaters nodded their heads together and Walden took Rowena up to her bed chambers. On the way up she noticed that most rooms looked the same. Rowena’s bed chambers had black carpet, with white walls, a high ceiling and new looking chandelier in the centre that had old fashioned candles on each stick.

Rowena walked straight to the bed and lay down. ‘No one will be able to enter this room except-’

He stopped talking as he noticed Rowena on the bed, already asleep. He couldn’t help but smile and chuckle at the sight. She looked cute like that. He moved over and gently pulled the blankets from under her and placed them over her. Rowena groaned and rolled over.

Walden moved away while keeping his eyes on Rowena. They could discuss things tomorrow but first she needed to rest up and get her strength back. Walden had a feeling that she was going to need it.

When Rowena awoke the next morning, she found herself alone in her bed chambers. She looked next to her and saw a tray with breakfast on it. Rowena moved it because she was hungry but before eating any of it. What if someone had poisoned it?

The chamber door opened and Walden walked in. Rowena sat up straighter and frowned, pulling the covers back over her, even though she was dressed. He was wearing tight black jeans, with an open black collared shirt that was only buttoned up half-way. Rowena’s eyes narrowed as she watched him. Did he always dress like that?

‘I did nothing to the food,’ he said as he placed a glass of orange juice on the tray. ‘And there’s a very strong healing potion there too, it should work instantly and it should make you a hundred percent again.’

He then walked away and sat down on chair he had conjured in the corner. Rowena looked him over. He would probably be the only

Death Eater that she trusted. He protected all those times before, why would he stop now?

She hesitantly picked up the fork and ate a small piece of egg. It tasted fine. She then began to eat quickly and Walden continued to watch her. She felt a little embarrassed but she was hungry. All of the Death Eaters had now seen her during a weak period. She couldn't let that happen again.

When she finished eating she drank the potion and once it too was gone Walden took the tray away and left the room. She got up out of bed and fixed her clothing. She didn't remember much last night apart from collapsing on the bed. She had never felt more grateful to have a warm, comfortable bed to sleep in.

Walden came back into the room quickly and he waited until Rowena was ready. She made towards the door but Walden spoke and Rowena stopped in her tracks. 'I was going to tell you last night but you went to sleep. So, just so you know, it's the same as before, only you and I can come into this room. I thought it would be safe in case something happens.'

'Why would something happen?' asked Rowena quietly.

'I just think that some of the Death Eaters aren't sure about you taking over,' explained Walden. 'I just want to make sure that you're safe.'

'You're saying I'm going to have to get them to follow me?'

'Yes,' said Walden truthfully. 'Many think you're not capable of running things.'

'I see,' she said quietly.

They made their way into the lounge room and Rowena took her seat at the front of the room. Her chair was like the one her father used to sit in. It was tall, black and throne-like with a high back. She quite liked it. She sat down and rubbed her hands on it. When people entered the room she stopped and paid attention.

All Death Eaters filed into the room and took their seats, Walden sitting on her immediate right. She was glad he knew where his place was.

'I want to know what happened in the battle with my father,' she said quickly.

No one spoke. No one seemed as though they wanted to. Rowena sighed. She knew she would have to pick someone. She thought Bella would tell her without much hesitation.

'Bella, why you don't tell me what happened then?'

'Alright,' she said happily. 'We don't know what happened in the house with your father but we know what happened in the graveyard. With our ranks we lost my husband, Rodolphus, Jugson, Travers, and Crabbe Snr and...'

'I'm sorry to hear that,' said Rowena, looking at Bella.

'And we lost many of the younger Death Eaters,' said Bella continuing without any hesitation. 'We have already given them a burial. We were hoping you wouldn't mind.'

Rowena shook her head and gestured for Bella to continue. 'How many of the younger Death Eaters died?'

'All of them, except for Draco, Theodore, Pansy, Daphne and Marcus.'

Bella nodded her head once and continued. Rowena got the feeling that Bella wasn't too caring about the death of her husband. She knew Bella had been in love with Voldemort even though nothing was going to happen there.

'And the Order lost Fred Weasley, as you know, Mundungus Fletcher, who was killed by Antonin, Hestia Jones, whom Rabastan killed, Seamus Finnigan, whom Amycus killed and a Hogwarts teacher, Madam Hooch who was killed by Rookwood.'

Rowena tried not to think about the Order's loss too much. 'What about the prisoner?'

'Hannah is still with us,' answered Dolohov. '

'Where is Hannah being kept now?' asked Rowena looking around.

'We made some cells in the dungeons,' said Greyback gruffly. 'They're worse than the other ones.'

'How?' asked Rowena.

'We had Walden place some... toys... down there,' replied Bella excitedly.

Rowena looked to Walden and he looked back, giving her a small wink. Rowena gave him a cold, hard look and he turned away. She wasn't about to take that from anyone. 'I hope Hannah is still being fed and everything?'

'Of course,' said Rookwood. 'We're not that cruel.'

Rowena immediately thought otherwise. She had never met people like everyone in this room before. Most of them she knew to be cruel and sadistic but Rowena didn't fear them but she still didn't see them as friends either.

She looked around the lounge room and wondered how safe they were going to be here. 'How do you know we won't be detected here, by doing magic and stuff?' asked Rowena.

'Because no one would be bothered to look here,' said Rookwood. 'But I think there is something we could do about that.'

'Like what?' asked Rowena.

'What if we took over the Ministry,' he told her.

‘Are you insane?’ said Rowena in high voice. ‘Albus and the Order are probably going to the Ministry. How do you think my picture and wanted things got into the papers. The Order never had control over that. If we wanted to take the Ministry then it should have been done before the battle. You would have needed my father.’

Rookwood wasn't finished though. ‘What if we just mess around then? Place a few people under the Imperius curse and see what happens. Would it be possible to push Dumbledore and the Order out of the Ministry?’

Rowena thought it through as he spoke the words. ‘I suppose we could do that,’ she said slowly. ‘But to push Albus and the Order out of the Ministry entirely would be hard. They have people who work there but it could be done, using the right tactics and planning.’

‘Have funerals been held for the people that died?’

Bella shook her head slowly. ‘Only the young ones have been buried.’

‘Are the other bodies still around?’ she asked next.

This time, everyone nodded. ‘We set up a temporary morgue on the second floor,’ said Walden.

Rowena frowned slightly. ‘How many floors are there?’

‘Five,’ replied Lucius. ‘Everyone here has their own room and most get their own bathroom. ‘It’s very big and spacious.’

Rowena nodded. It definitely did seem very spacious. ‘How many charms around the place?’ she asked.

‘Many,’ said Bella. ‘It took a few of us to do but we got there. So, no magic should be seen coming from this location.’

There it was. That’s what they had forgotten to tell her. It would be hard for the Ministry to detect them because of the charms protecting the manor. Rowena knew it was hard but not impossible. She

decided to end the meeting there so she could have a proper look around before deciding what else had to be done.

She got up from her chair and no one else had yet moved. Rowena thought it strange but she said nothing and left the room. She walked down the rest of the hallway to see what other rooms were on this floor. She saw another room which looked like the lounge room but it was empty. Rowena wondered what they had planned for in here.

The other rooms were small. There was a bathroom, a kitchen and what looked to be a laundry. Rowena walked through the kitchen and she came to another door. She opened it and looked out. It led to a backyard. It looked similar to the one at the Malfoy Manor but this one didn't have a porch or anything. Rowena knew things could be changed though.

The grass was lush and green and there seemed to be what looked like a shed but Rowena wasn't sure. She knew there could be anything in there and she wasn't about to find out right now. She still had a whole house to explore. When she turned back into the kitchen she yelped in surprise. Walden was there.

'What are you doing?' she asked exhaling sharply.

'I'm protecting you, remember, it's what I'm supposed to,' he replied.

'I know but must you do it now?' she asked. 'I don't think anything's going to happen.'

'You don't know the Death Eaters like I do,' said Walden firmly, though he changed his tone quickly. 'I just mean that I know them better and I think it's best to keep you in sight.'

'I'm not a child,' said Rowena, her anger rising. 'I can look after myself.'

'I know you can,' said Walden. 'I just want to be sure. Anything could happen and you know it.'

After a moment's thought, Rowena said, 'Fine. But don't startle me next time.'

He nodded and Rowena went back to exploring. She went up to the first floor and all she found was bedrooms and bathrooms and the same with the second, third, fourth and fifth floors. Rowena learnt her room was on the fifth floor, though she didn't remember going down that many stairs this morning and the difference was that there was a morgue on the second floor.

She went back down all stairs, Walden still following, and she went down to the cells. Greyback hadn't lied. The cells were different, except for the yucky stuff and the smell. The walls still looked grimy and turning black and the floor was already dirty. Rowena wondered if it just looked like this or if the Death Eaters made it look this way.

There was only one cell that had its door closed and Rowena peered inside. Hannah was in there. She was looking dirtier than ever but she didn't seem in bad health. She looked as though she was eating and sleeping though Rowena was sure that some of the Death Eaters had been rough and sexual towards her, which she expected.

She left the dungeons and went back to her bed chambers and lay down. She felt tired, even though she had done nothing today. Walden left the room and when he returned he had more food with him. Rowena frowned a little and looked at the clock, it was late afternoon. Rowena wondered where all that time had gone.

Rowena woke up a few hours later. She looked around but Walden wasn't in the room. The food he had brought up was still sitting on the table. She moved over and heated it with her wand and she checked it. There was still nothing wrong with and she ate quickly. Afterwards, she showered quickly and changed into clean black robes that she found in the wardrobe. They fitted her perfectly. She gazed at her appearance in the mirror, it had greatly improved. She was starting to feel and look like her old self.

She went back into the lounge room and found most Death Eaters still in there. Rowena sat down in her chair again and cleared her

throat. All Death Eaters turned and sat up straighter, giving Rowena their full attention. She had a plan and it was time to tell them.

‘You need to go on a raid,’ she told them. ‘We need to show that we have not disappeared and that we are still something to be reckoned with.’

‘What do you suggest?’ asked Bella impatiently.

‘I’m saying that you should all raid an all Muggle village and kill everyone. You can have your fun but make sure everyone dies, adults, women, children, babies, everyone. I want the Order to rethink what they know and I want them shaken to the core. Make this the bloodiest one yet.’

Rowena looked around and she saw many smiles around the room. They all apparently liked that idea. She thought it sounded a little barbaric but she knew something drastic needed to happen. The Death Eaters were now hers to command and she needed to show them that she could handle it.

‘When do we go?’ asked Bella, excitedly.

‘You leave in a few nights time,’ replied Rowena. ‘I want you to all plan this through. Think about it. Don’t just go rushing in and killing everyone in sight, someone may escape that way and we do not need more people escaping to tell their story.’

Nods of agreement went around the table and Rowena felt relieved. She was happy they agreed and were going to do as she said. Now all she needed was for them to be successful and it would be done. She would have sent them on the raid tonight or even tomorrow night but she decided they should hold funerals for the men lost to them. They died for this cause and they deserved to be recognised for it.



## Chapter Twenty-Four – Lucky Escape

The next night, Rowena and her followers stood in the backyard, in the far right hand corner. Earlier that day she had built a cemetery for the graves that had to be placed somewhere. The bodies couldn't remain on the second floor forever, it would be really disgusting and Rowena was sure the smell would become unbearable.

Rowena lit candles around them in a circle and had dug up five graves and made four stone tombstones. She had also placed an iron black gate around them, to keep the dead in peace and private. She knew it sounded silly but Rowena wanted their lives to become easier now that they were gone to another place.

The night was cold and heavy. Everyone shivered and breathed heavily as they all stood in a circle inside the candles and stood still. Rowena wanted them to think about why they were there, to think that next time it could be them being buried in a grave here. Rowena looked to her side and against the fence the bodies lay, tied up in a bag. Rowena couldn't imagine being like that, dead, not knowing you weren't there, that your body was no longer your own.

After much silence, Rowena lifted her wand gently and flicked it. All four bodies lay in their respective graves and Rowena placed a single black rose on each of the bodies. She looked over at Bella, who appeared solemn but not sad. Rowena wondered if they had any feelings for each other at all and it surprised her more to her holding hands with Rabastan, well, they were family still.

After another long silence, Rowena covered the bodies with dirt from the ground and placed the tombstones at their respective graves. She looked around. 'Does anyone want to say anything before we finish?'

It was still quiet. Rowena could see everyone's breath on the air. She knew everyone was cold, as was she but this still needed to be done. They could suffer the cold for a little while. It took a while but Alecto Carrow stepped forwards and raised her hand slightly. Rowena had never seen her nervous before. She nodded to Alecto.

'These men fought beside us and what they sacrificed should never be forgotten,' said Alecto loudly, so that everyone could hear her. 'I know Rodolphus was a very skilled man and he will be missed among us. Travers was also capable and though I didn't know him well, he served our past Lord well. Jugson tried hard but I don't think he would have lasted much longer, though his number amongst us will be remembered and Crabbe was, at times, not all there, but he still helped us and we thank them all.'

She stepped back into the circle and a few people nodded, including Rowena. She was surprised by what Alecto said. She could never picture her saying such nice, well as nice as possible, things about anyone, except her brother, maybe. Rowena looked at Crabbe's son. He seemed shaken, though there were no tears, nothing else to show how he was feeling.

She turned her gaze to the younger people left in the group. Draco and Pansy stood together with a few others from their school. They seemed shaken also, but Rowena suspected that it was for different reasons.

When the funerals ended all Death Eaters went back inside immediately but Rowena and Walden remained outside.

'Is everything alright, my Lord?' he asked, moving to stand beside her.

Rowena continued to look down at the graves but she nodded slowly. 'Yes, I am fine,' she replied. 'I worry about the raid.'

'We have been on them before.'

'I know,' said Rowena, slightly annoyed. 'That's not the point. This one's different. I feel like this one is more dangerous than previous ones. Though I will admit that I have only been on one of the previous ones, but it still seemed tamed in a way. Not everyone was killed and I can't believe I have told you all to kill everyone on this one.'

'Why are you then?' asked Walden.

‘Because I need to show that I’m in charge,’ Rowena replied. ‘You said I would need everyone to trust me and have faith that I could lead them. Part of me isn’t sure I can lead any of you, but I’m sure I have my father’s strength in me. All I need is for it to emerge.’

Walden nodded but said no more. Rowena wasn’t feeling like talking either. They returned to the house together and once inside Rowena locked the back door behind them.

Later that same night, the Order of the Phoenix gathered in the graveyard beyond the Riddle house once more. Most of them wondered why they were here. It sounded like a ridiculous reason. Dumbledore had decided to go back to the house and retrieve Voldemort’s body to bury it in the graveyard.

They were now all standing the graveyard in front of Voldemort’s grave. Most members thought this exercise pointless. None of them could understand why he would want to give Voldemort a burial, except for Harry maybe but shouldn’t this have been a personal thing?

Voldemort’s pale and now lifeless body was put into a grave made by Dumbledore and the Order stood around it.

‘May you now rest in peace, Tom,’ said Dumbledore softly.

They stood in silence for a little longer before someone broke it by speaking. ‘Is this really necessary?’ asked Remus quietly.

‘I believe so,’ replied Dumbledore.

‘Why?’

Dumbledore sighed heavily. ‘I knew Tom before he became Voldemort and he wasn’t different but there was almost something innocent about him. I’ll always remember him for the youth he once was. And I’m sure Rowena would appreciate giving him a burial.’

‘What if she wanted to do it herself?’ asked Sirius.

'I don't believe she would mind,' replied Dumbledore. 'Just as long as it was done, respectfully.'

'But why do this for her?' asked Remus.

'I still love Rowena, a small failing of mine I suppose, but I'm hoping this might get her to see something. What, I'm not sure. But if it's there within her, she'll find it and I'm hoping this gesture will get her there.'

'I'm not sure I agree with that,' said Sirius quietly. 'She may see right through it.'

'Yes,' said Dumbledore. 'And that is the risk we face.'

'I don't understand,' said Hermione, overhearing their conversation.

'I think we take the risk in angering her by burying her father,' said Dumbledore. 'She may take it the wrong way, which I am more than prepared to see through.'

'What if it comes down to it?' asked Harry, moving over to them.

'What do you mean, Harry?' asked Dumbledore, watching Harry curiously.

'I mean what if we end up having no choice but to see the end of Rowena? What if we have to kill her to stop this new growing threat?'

'That is not an option,' said Dumbledore stubbornly.

Harry and Remus exchanged glances but neither of them said anything more. This wasn't the time or the place to argue about Rowena's fate. They weren't even close to getting their and it was unfortunate that they all knew it.

A few nights later Rowena and followers arrived at a small Muggle village, far away from their hide-out. Rowena had checked the place out before they went in. No one seemed to recognise her and it was a great sign for her. She had already told the others what the place

looked like and mapped out a plan for them. It was a rough one but it would do.

They arrived there just before midnight and Rowena sent them into the village in groups of three. The people she had brought here to join were here also, but Rowena wasn't sure how excited they were about it all. Ruban almost seemed repulsed by the idea. Rowena wondered if they knew what they were getting into when they agreed to join up.

Rowena shook her head, as there was no time to think about it now. Rowena wasn't planning to join in. She and Walden were going to keep a look out for any sign of the Order turning up. When she looked over at the village, she could tell that the raid had begun. She could see houses burning and thick black smoke rising into the night sky. People were beginning to scream and panic and she could even hear some people scream their pleas for their family. It almost ripped Rowena a part but she knew this had to be done.

Walden noticed the look on Rowena's face. 'It's too late to stop the raid now.'

'I know that,' she hissed quietly. 'I'm not planning to.'

'Really?' he asked in surprise.

'Yes, really,' she said coldly.

She folded her arms across her chest and she continued to look towards the village. The fire was becoming thicker and the screams were beginning to die down. Rowena couldn't believe how quick that had gone. She looked towards Walden questioningly.

'You told them to kill everyone. We're professionals, it doesn't take long.'

'I'll say,' Rowena whispered to herself.

Within another twenty minutes it was over. Rowena and Walden made their way into the village. Rowena wasn't prepared for anything she was about to see. The middle of the village had become a blood

bath. All cement areas were painted with blood and bodies. Rowena's eyes passed over a small baby. She could tell it was a boy. He was lying still.

Rowena took one step forwards but stopped when a warning went out. 'The Order is here!'

Rowena and many other people turned their heads and sure enough the Order was coming, on broomsticks. Seeing this made Rowena panic like never before. She turned to her Death Eaters. 'What are you waiting for? Let's go, get out of here now! Go back to the hide-out but ensure that you are not followed!'

Much chaos ensued. The Death Eaters ran for cover and Walden grabbed Rowena's hand and started to run, dragging her along with him. Rowena felt grateful for a moment because she couldn't run as fast as he could. Rowena looked behind her and saw some Order members chasing them and Rowena couldn't help but notice that they were catching up quickly.

She tried to warn Walden but she knew he wouldn't hear her. The last thing Rowena wanted now was a confrontation with the Order. She needed to show them that they were back not she didn't want them drawn into a full blown war right now. She knew her Death Eaters weren't ready for it and neither was she.

They continued to run and Rowena kept on looking behind her. Rowena suddenly yelped as they stopped abruptly and she bumped into Walden. She quickly moved away but he grabbed her and placed an arm around her to stop her from going anywhere. There were two Order members now in front of them. Of course the brooms were faster.

Rowena looked ahead of them and saw Albus and Severus. She couldn't believe it. They weren't getting out of this one alive. Rowena took out her wand and held it up, ready for something to come but she only heard Albus speak to her.

'Rowena, please do not do this. Cease activity now before more of your followers are killed.'

'I'm not listening to you,' shouted Rowena.

She didn't believe that many people or that anyone had died. She and Walden turned to go the other way but four more Order members stood behind them. Rowena looked at Walden. Now she was worried. 'They won't leave without you,' Walden whispered.

Rowena wasn't as confident. She looked at the other four people, Harry, Hermione, Charlie and Luna. Rowena frowned. She wondered when more people joined the Order. This was only going to get harder.

'Any suggestions?' Rowena asked through her teeth.

'Not really,' answered Walden. 'I was hoping you could think of something.'

'There's no way we can take on six capable w-'

Rowena was cut off as a roaring sound deafened them to everything else. Rowena covered her ears and watched but Walden straightened and frowned at the sound, as though it were familiar. Then Rowena was sure he had heard it before. He grabbed Rowena and pushed her to the ground, his body landing on top of hers. Rowena gasped and a huge fireball surrounded them and encircled them. The fire began to enclose on them quickly and Walden acted quickly. He waved his wand in front of them and his grip on Rowena tightened and together they disappeared just before the flames reached them.

When Rowena hit the ground in the forest she screamed. She opened her eyes and looked around without moving. They were back in the forest where their hide-out was. She noticed someone was lying on her and wasn't moving. She pushed Walden and said his name a few times before she realised he was unconscious. She rolled him off and she brought herself to her knees and looked down at him.

She yelled for help and it didn't take long for it to arrive. Dolohov and Amycus came running over and they picked Walden up and took him inside and up to the medical room. Bella came out and she helped Rowena to the same room though Rowena tried to go into the lounge room.

In the medical room Walden was already lying down, still unconscious. Rowena felt worried. How many times did Walden have to go through this to protect her? It felt as though it were becoming ridiculous. She lay down on a bed and she let Yaxley look her over. When he was finished he went to Walden. It didn't take long to revive him and he sat up quickly.

Once he caught Rowena's eye he relaxed and lay down on his bed again. Rowena had never seen anyone so happy to see her. She chuckled but then quickly stopped when she realised Yaxley was still in the room. It made Rowena think that they needed a nurse here. She had another idea.

The Order arrived at the Minister of Magic's office not long after they returned from their small encounter with the enemy. They were all down and felt despair. Dumbledore led them and the others followed. With him were Remus, Harry, Hermione, Ron, Luna, Moody, Arthur, Tonks and Kingsley. It had become no secret that some Ministry workers were working with the Order. Scrimgeour didn't particularly like it but it did have some advantages.

The Minister looked up as the group entered his small office. The office was big enough for one person but it wasn't overly crowded with furniture. Before, when Fudge had the office it was full with things he didn't use, things he didn't need. Scrimgeour cleaned it out as quickly as possible when he moved in.

'We need another conference,' said Dumbledore before the Minister could speak.

He sat up straighter in his chair and placed his quill on his desk gently. He looked Dumbledore over with his yellowish eyes. Dumbledore was a good man but Scrimgeour sometimes wondered if the older man had another reason for persisting this so badly and with much effort.



Surely the Dark Lord's daughter didn't pose that much of a threat to them. She was now only twenty years old, surely she wasn't as skilled as most people in the Order or the Ministry.

'And why would that be?' asked Scrimgeour standing up, his chair scraping along the floor as it was pushed back.

'Because we have just encountered Rowena Riddle and... there was a massacre,' he replied grimly.

'More like a bloodbath,' said Harry bitterly.

Harry was angry with Dumbledore, Rowena, the Order, himself, everyone. He hated that Rowena seemed to get so lucky every time, except when she went to visit her friends but it eventually came back to her. Harry couldn't help but wonder how that was working out for her. One they locked up escaped, one has disappeared and two who join have been killed.

'Where?' asked Scrimgeour, sounding worried.

'It was a Muggle village,' replied Dumbledore. 'Every single person was killed.'

'Slaughtered more like,' said Harry through his teeth.

Everyone turned to look at Harry, who did have more to say on this. 'Look, I think we should have seen this coming,' he started heatedly. 'We knew that the Death Eaters and Rowena disappeared after Voldemort was killed. At some point they all joined together again and I think Rowena wanted to show that they were still around, that they hadn't gone anywhere and I think we've been overestimated how far Rowena is prepared to go with this.'

No one said anything so Harry continued. 'We all know what Rowena is capable of it. I believe if her father can do it then Rowena can. She has her father's abilities, you've seen it. She murdered her mother and yet no one, but Remus suspected and no one questioned her about it. She was treated as a victim.'

'How do you know she meant to kill her mother, Harry?' asked Dumbledore.

Harry's eyes went wide in shock. 'Are you serious?' he asked quietly. 'She said nothing, to anyone. She went about her life as though nothing were wrong. If it was an accident then why didn't she confess?'

'Maybe she was afraid of the consequences,' said Albus gently. He saw Harry roll his eyes and he sighed lightly. 'Harry, Rowena is not a clone of Voldemort. I know for a fact that she does not care about blood heritage and I know she doesn't mind Muggles but-'

'Then why did she have them all slaughtered like animals?' shouted Harry.

'Harry please, we won't know the full story until we capture Rowena,' said Albus firmly.

Harry knew the conversation was over and he stormed from the Minister's office. Hermione gave everyone an apologetic look before going after Harry. Ron eventually followed. Luna watched the whole scene with mild interest. Her blue eyes were drooping. Luna was tired. They hadn't been able to rest since the battle finished.

'What are you suggesting we do?' asked Scrimgeour after a few moments of silence.

Dumbledore breathed out heavily. 'Well,' he started calmly. 'I think we should do another meeting, with officials and the press. People need to know that there is a great danger out there and we have a duty to inform them. No one will be able to look after themselves otherwise.'

After everything Scrimgeour and the Ministry had been through with Dumbledore and his group with Voldemort, he decided enough was enough. It was time they stood together as one and fought together as one.

'Agreed,' said Scrimgeour quickly.

Outside the Minister's room Hermione found Harry sitting on the stairs that led down to the cells. Hermione wrinkled her nose slightly. It didn't smell too nice down here. It stunk of sweat, blood and dry urine, it was awful. She sat down next to Harry and nudged him gently. He looked at her only briefly. He looked down between his feet and sighed. Harry no longer knew what to think about what was happening around them.

'Dumbledore's making a mistake,' said Harry quietly.

'That may be,' said Hermione. 'But he loves Rowena. Did you really expect Dumbledore to forget who she was and what she means to him? I don't think its right to ask anyone to do that and we all know Dumbledore puts trust in people that most people would not. Dumbledore knows Rowena better than any of us and I think our best chance of capturing her safely is through Dumbledore's help.'

'You don't think it will come to her death?'

Hermione continued to look at Harry and she shook her head gently. 'No, I don't,' she replied softly. 'I know Rowena is cold and distant, but she's not a monster, she isn't her father and I think we all forget that.'

'I'm amazed you're defending her,' said Harry tightly.

'So am I,' said Hermione softly. 'But I do agree with Dumbledore in the sense that we have to hear things from Rowena's point of view.'

'She'd probably just lie,' said Harry sourly.

'Possibly,' said Hermione calmly. 'Though I'm sure they'll just give her a truth potion and check to make sure it's working.'

There was a long pause between them. Hermione continued to watch Harry. He seemed angry but he kept it bottled. Harry kept his eyes on the dark stair between his legs. His stare on it was intense, as though something bad would happen if he looked away. Harry didn't even remember feeling this angry when Voldemort was around, hurting people and killing innocent people just because he could. Rowena

seemed to only be doing this to show she could. She had to seem like her father to the Death Eaters, otherwise, why would they protect her like they did?

‘We should go back,’ said Hermione softly.

She stood up and pulled Harry to his feet. She chuckled softly and Harry finally looked at her. He hadn't realised before why Ron wanted her so badly. Hermione was a beautiful woman. Harry started to ponder the reason why he hadn't noticed this before. Had he blocked it out? Was it because of Ron or Mrs. Weasley even? Harry knew Molly wanted nothing more than Ron and Hermione together but he never asked why it would have been a problem if he loved Hermione also.

Hermione seemed to understand the look from Harry, as she cleared her throat and began walking up the stairs. Ron had followed them but instead of waiting for them at the top of the stairs, he left. He noticed the look from Harry too and he wasn't about to wait around and see what Hermione wanted. He was scared it would be the same thing.

Harry caught up with Hermione and their eyes met. Harry sent her a small, friendly smile and she returned it. They made their way back to the Minister's office but there was no one there.

‘They must be in the Atrium,’ said Harry.

Hermione nodded her head in agreement and they both set off together. They had been right. Everyone else was in there along with officials and many people of the press. It was about to happen again. Harry wondered how loud this one would get, especially when people learnt what Voldemort's daughter had done. It appeared no one had spoken yet. Harry and Hermione arrived at the perfect time to hear everything.

‘We have some sad and devastating news to relate to the wizarding community,’ said Dumbledore loud and clear so everyone could hear him. ‘We have intercepted Rowena Riddle and the Death Eaters but

all of them escaped. Some Death Eaters were injured but it was not life threatening. A Muggle village was attacked. No one survived.'

Dumbledore went quiet and the Minister of Magic stood up and addressed everyone. Even he was amazed at how quiet the crowd was tonight, they appeared to be able to contain themselves. 'We are insisting that people never travel alone anymore, especially at night time. Try to make it a group of about four or five. We want the wizarding people to remain safe and secure. The Ministry will be sending out warnings and updates and keep an ear out for your radios. We will send warnings via that also.'

When Scrimgeour finished speaking it was still quiet until the same small man from the last meeting walked to the side and around the front of the large group and peered over at the Minister. 'You expect people to be able to protect themselves against this? Why did you not stop them when you had the chance? Did you not think it wise? What about all the innocent Muggles who died because you had not stopped this woman earlier? I had heard rumours you once had her in custody before?'

'It is true,' said Dumbledore gravely. His voice was beginning to fail and he couldn't understand why. He was sure about his feelings on this. 'Rowena was once in our custody but she managed to escape but it wasn't on her own. A member of the Order trusted her without hesitation and it proved costly.'

'Proved costly?' the man asked outraged. 'That's all you can say on this matter? Where is the justice? The blame? What is becoming of these people? You have allowed this menace to continue and all you can say to us right now is to travel in groups and protect ourselves. It is unbecoming of you Dumbledore. I'm sure people expect more.'

The small man walked away and he left the room. Every pair of eyes in the room watched him. The room remained silent and Dumbledore sighed. They were losing people's confidence and Dumbledore knew it wouldn't take much for it to disappear altogether. He didn't want to see that happen. It would be too much.

As soon as the conference ended the Order went back to headquarters for another meeting.

A large sigh echoed Rowena's bed chambers. The room was dark and silent. The only light coming in to the room was from the moonlight which poured its silver blanket across the bare floor through the window. Rowena had cleared out most of the room. The furniture bothered her. It made things cluttered and it felt unnecessary to have so many things. She had looked into rooms of other people in this manor and some rooms you could barely see the floor.

Rowena leaned back in her black throne chair and placed both hands on her abdomen, her left resting on top of her right hand and she sighed again. It was after midnight and Rowena still hadn't done the after battle meeting thing. Right now she didn't want to. She wanted to sleep but in another way, she didn't want to sleep.

She had been injured in the small battle with the Order. She was amazed anyone got out alive, especially Walden and herself. She knew a few others were injured. Like Alecto, she had been burned from the backfire and Rabastan suffered a broken arm but it was nothing that couldn't be fixed.

Rowena sighed once again. She was going to have a meeting before but she quickly felt sick. She decided to save it for later. Rowena tilted her head to the side gently and her eyes closed slowly as the door creaked open. She knew it was Walden. No one else would be able to get in here.

She heard Walden's heavy footsteps walk over to her though he made little sound. He stopped beside her chair and glanced down at her. Rowena didn't move. Her eyes opened and she went back to staring at the wall space below the window. It was bare and vacant looking. Rowena didn't want to look outside. She kept sensing that it would hurt her.

'My Lord,' said Walden quietly. 'The others are still waiting in the lounge room. We want to know if you are planning to have the meeting tonight.'

Rowena didn't answer him straight away. She didn't move her eyes from the wall and her body didn't move once. She sighed again. She had lost count of how many times she had done that tonight. She knew she looked and sounded bored but it's not how she actually felt. She was just tired but this had to be done now.

'Yes,' she breathed faintly.

After a few minutes, Rowena pulled herself up from the chair and she left the room with Walden following behind her. They entered the living room and Rowena immediately took her chair at the head of the table. She was still tired but this needed to be done now.

'Alright, let's get this over with then we can all sleep,' said Rowena quickly entering the living room. 'I want to know what happened and... how did we escape?' She was feeling confused and it showed, but the Death Eaters knew she hadn't seen that before, nor had they told her what it was.

'It was our secret,' said Yaxley quietly. His light eyes were focused on Rowena with a light ferocity. 'It was the first time we've ever had to use it and no, your father didn't know about it. We had a pact and we kept it. The spell needs a minimum of seven wands going to the same cause. It creates a ball of fire and it surrounds the people it's supposed to protect but it won't last. It's a distraction to allow the people inside a chance to disappearate.'

Rowena thought it through. She couldn't believe how clever that was. 'Who came up with it?' she asked curiously.

It went quiet. No one seemed to want to tell her. She looked around and her eyes connected with Bella's. She was sitting next to Rabastan and Rowena frowned slightly as she noticed they were holding hands again and not bothering to hide it. Rowena knew Rabastan was younger than Bella, though she wasn't sure by how much.

'It was Snape,' hissed Bella.

Rowena nodded. That's why everyone went quiet. They had all thought that Snape was on their side. She also knew how much the Death Eaters wanted to change the fact that Snape was still alive. Then, Rowena remembered she hadn't asked Walden.

'How are you feeling?'

'Fine,' Walden replied. 'I have healed well.'

'Speaking of which,' said Rowena slowly turning back to look at everyone. 'How hard would it be to break into Hogwarts?'

A few gasps went around the room. Rowena couldn't understand what the problem was but the Death Eaters did. 'My Lord,' started Rookwood. 'Hogwarts is heavily protected and it would be near impossible to enter while Dumbledore remains there.'

'There must be a flaw somehow,' said Rowena. 'How did you get in last time?'

'We didn't actually get in...'

'You're lying,' hissed Rowena.

All heads whipped quickly to look at Rowena. They hadn't heard that tone before and it made some of them jump in surprise.

'Um... my Lord?' questioned Rookwood.

'I know that in my sixth year you broke into Hogwarts. I know Greyback attacked Bill Weasley. How did you get in?' she asked firmly.

'It was Draco,' said Greyback roughly. 'He let us in through the room of requirement.'

'Which is what?'

'A room that only appears when you need it,' said Bella quickly. 'But Draco hid a vanishing cabinet in there and he kept the matching pair



in Knockturn Alley.' Bella saw the confused look still on Rowena's face. 'Knockturn Alley is near Diagon Alley. It's just another place with shops and stuff for our kind,' added Bella.

'I see,' said Rowena quietly.

They had a small shopping village for wizards near Durmstrang too though most of the time it was cold and not many people went there. Speaking of small villages, Rowena thought of Hogsmeade. 'Hogsmeade is near Hogwarts, right?'

'Yes,' said Rookwood. Other Death Eaters nodded along too.

'I have someone to see there. Walden will accompany me. Meeting is over,' said Rowena quickly.

Bella opened her mouth to speak but before she could say anything Rowena had already left the room. She returned to her bed chambers and she told Walden to stay outside the door. She wanted to be alone right now. Her mind was racing with thoughts of Aberforth. He lived and worked in Hogsmeade.

## Chapter Twenty-Five - Flashback

The front door to the Dumbledore estate opened but neither of the two occupants in the kitchen noticed anything. Aberforth could hear nothing but shouting from the kitchen. His normally grumpy looking face was briefly showing concern and confusion. There hadn't been shouting in this house for many years. He approached the closed kitchen door, thinking that Albus would notice his presence immediately but he seemed to notice nothing. He moved his head closer to the door and listened before interrupting.

Rowena stormed to the other side of the kitchen, her arms crossed over her chest, her face etched in pure anger. Her light brown eyes shot to where Albus remained standing and she huffed out air sharply.

'I don't understand what you want from me,' she said, feigning innocence.

'I believe you do know,' said Albus softly. 'You weren't suspended from Durmstrang for no reason, Rowena. The headmaster was made aware of your actions...'

'No, he was made aware of what Baransti thought were my actions!' Rowena interrupted curtly. 'He has it out for me.'

'Something which you have never been able to prove,' Albus retorted.

'You never believe me,' Rowena muttered.

Albus sighed faintly. 'I want to, Rowena, really, I do, but you have to understand, you getting angry and reacting to whatever may be happening is not helping the situation.'

'So, it's my fault, as usual?' Rowena questioned heatedly.

'That is not what I said.'

There was a slight, silent pause in the kitchen where neither knew what to say. Well, Rowena had many things she wanted to say to

Albus but she knew many of them would get her into trouble and make things even worse for her.

‘I think you should change schools,’ said Albus, voicing Rowena’s one true fear.

A breath hitched in her throat and her eyes widened as she looked at Albus in shock. She released her arms from her chest and she walked towards the kitchen table, resting her hands upon the back of a chair.

‘You said I could choose which school I went to,’ said Rowena, her voice almost calm. ‘You said it would up to me and...’

‘And I also mentioned that if something were to happen, anything at all then I would have to remove you from whatever school you chose and send you to Hogwarts.’

‘You never wanted me there in the first place!’

‘I never said that,’ said Albus calmly.

‘You implied it.’

The normal twinkle in Albus’ eyes was gone as he looked at his ward. He knew she was slowly changing into his greatest fear. He couldn’t let her become what he knew she could be. He sighed lightly again when Rowena looked away, not wanting to meet his gaze any longer. He watched as her cheeks tinged a pink colour, knowing she was probably feeling embarrassed.

‘I no longer have a choice,’ said Albus, moving towards the kitchen door to leave.

Rowena took one step towards him, moving from around the chair. ‘You always have a choice,’ she said quickly, desperation clear in her voice. ‘I don’t want to go to Hogwarts.’

‘Why?’ Albus asked immediately.

Rowena shrugged nervously, avoiding Albus' eyes once again as she glanced at the floor, finding it much more interesting. 'I don't know. It would be weird,' she said slowly, shrugging.

'You are going to Hogwarts,' Albus stated.

'No!' Rowena half-shouted, tears instantly springing to her eyes.

'Rowena you aren't leaving me much choice...'

'Albus, please,' she said quickly. 'I like going to Durmstrang. It's small and I know things there. I don't want to learn everything all over again. I promise I will behave from now on. I won't do anything else.'

Silence fell between them once more only to be broken by the slight creaking of the kitchen door opening. Both Rowena and Albus looking towards it, immediately seeing Aberforth standing there. Suddenly, Rowena felt her spirits lift. She knew Albus' brother Aberforth would stick up for her. He always did.

Albus gave his younger brother a small smile. 'Ah Aberforth, how long have you been there?'

'Long enough,' he spoke gruffly. 'What's she done?' he instantly asked, pointing towards Rowena.

Inwardly, Albus rolled his eyes. He knew where this was going. It was about to become two against one as it always did when he interrupted one of their arguments.

'At school last year, as I am sure you remember, Rowena attacked a first year student for an offhand comment and this year alone she has attacked three different students for random and silly things.'

'How do you know they're silly?' Aberforth asked quickly. 'Did you ask exactly what happened?'

'Of course I did,' Albus replied calmly.

'Come on, Albus,' said Aberforth, dismissing the whole thing with a wave of his hand. 'You know what teenagers are like. I'm sure even if she were at Hogwarts, things wouldn't be much different. Besides, I'm sure she has learnt her lesson, right?' he asked, his blue eyes turning on Rowena.

Rowena bit her bottom lip as she looked at Aberforth. She nodded her head rapidly at him before looking towards Albus, her eyes full of hope. Albus exhaled heavily. He knew that he was going to have to give in to Rowena once again. Part of him thought that if he denied his ward then things with her personally would worsen and it would be his fault. He didn't spoil her but he supposed this one thing she wanted wouldn't be too bad if he could keep an eye on her.

'Fine,' Albus said eventually, to Rowena's pure delight. 'But I am going to make sure Headmaster Dobtcheff watches you like a hawk until I'm satisfied with your behaviour. And do not get any ideas. He will be updating me on everything.'

Rowena opened her mouth to speak but Albus held up his hand, stopping her. He wasn't yet finished speaking. 'If there is one more accident, doesn't matter who is at fault, I will send for you and you will go to Hogwarts. Is that understood?'

Rowena nodded her head quickly again and when Albus nodded his head once, Rowena knew she had won. She moved quickly and hugged Aberforth before giving Albus a long one. It was the first time since he was a child had she touched him. When she felt his arms go around her, hugging her back, she felt relieved and happy for the first time in a while.

## Chapter Twenty-Six - Hogwarts

The very next day before the sun rose, Rowena and Walden walked the rest of the way to the Hogs Head. Rowena wanted to go under cover of darkness and she didn't want the chance of getting seen by anyone. The streets of Hogsmeade were quiet. Everyone was still sleeping.

They walked until they came to stand outside a wooden door. Rowena looked up and read the wonky sign that read Hogs Head. She took out her wand and pointed it to the door. Walden stood behind her and continuously looked around for signs of anyone unwanted coming towards them. Rowena unlocked the door and they crept inside, the door creaking as it opened wider.

Once inside Rowena looked around. It was starting to get light. She looked round the bar. The stairs were at the back, she knew that. 'What the hell?!'

'Would you keep it down?' hissed Rowena.

She looked behind her and noticed a white goat walk past Walden's feet. She couldn't help but smile. That looked quite funny. She loved how confused Walden looked right now. If only he knew about all the goats. They walked behind the counter and through a second doorway, which led to the rickety staircase, which both Rowena and Walden climbed carefully, as to not make much sound.

The top of the stairs opened on to a sitting room with a threadbare carpet and a small fireplace, which was cold and above it hung a single large oil painting of blonde girl who gazed out at the room with a kind of vacant sweetness. Inside this room Rowena looked to the corner. There was a bed in which a tall figure lay upon it, sleeping. Rowena didn't know Aberforth slept in here sometimes, though she knew the portrait was of Ariana.

Walden noiselessly walked over to the portrait and looked at the girl within it. The girl stood in one spot and she looked upon Walden's face. She seemed confused. Rowena walked over to the small table in the room and she sat down on a wobble-legged chair. She placed

her wand on the table in front of her and she leaned on the table. They were waiting for Aberforth to awaken.

Once the light of the sun hit the top of the room, there was a stirring in the bed. Walden turned and face his attention on towards the bed. Rowena tapped the bottom of her shoe against the floor boards, making the dust jump and a dull thud reverberate the room.

She watched Aberforth stand up, he was still wearing his day robes and he immediately placed on his glasses before making the bed with his wand. Rowena couldn't believe he hadn't noticed anything wrong. She glanced at the portrait. Ariana had moved forwards, trying to get a better look, though she was still frowning.

'Hello, Aberforth.'

Her quiet voice made Aberforth jump and he quickly lit up the room. His eyes quickly found Walden and then Rowena. She was still sitting at the table.

'Expelliarmus!' shouted Walden.

Aberforth's wand shot out of his hand and Walden caught it easily. He then moved to stand behind Rowena's chair. She picked up her own wand and twirled it within her fingers. Aberforth was still staring at her. 'By God, what's happen to you?'

He was shocked by Rowena's appearance. She was aware that she looked different than before but it could not be helped. She had been living roughly for the last year. Only recently had it changed. Her eyes were still gaunt and her hair was clean but it appeared limp. Her face was still unnaturally pale and to Aberforth, it looked almost grey in colour and it seemed as though Rowena had lost a lot of weight.

'What are you doing here?' he asked angrily.

Rowena knew what Aberforth was like. He had a quick temper. Rowena smiled lightly. 'I hope you're not planning on anything foolish?'

‘No, but I think you are. How do you know Albus won't be here any second?’

‘Because you didn't know I was here until before,’ replied Rowena calmly. ‘I know you well, Aberforth. I know you wouldn't want to ask Albus for help or tell him that I was here. You would rather do it yourself.’

‘Don't you dare pretend to know me at all, traitor!’

‘Oh, I'm the traitor?’ asked Rowena quietly. ‘You used to love me.’

‘Yeah... used to,’ he whispered. ‘What do you want? Why are you here?’

Rowena stood up from the chair and it creaked. She pushed it away from her with her foot and she walked over to Aberforth, Walden stepped forwards a little too. She looked Aberforth over. She knew there was a good chance that he wouldn't help her but she needed to get into Hogwarts. Why, she wasn't sure but she wanted to get in there and see it. Albus had talked about Hogwarts before but Rowena never paid much attention, she now wished she had.

‘I want you to help me get into Hogwarts,’ said Rowena.

‘I'm not helping you do anything!’ Aberforth said loudly.

‘I'm sure you could be persuaded.’

‘Torture doesn't work on me,’ said Aberforth firmly.

Rowena was sure it wouldn't. She knew Aberforth and Albus didn't really get along but she knew Aberforth would still not do anything that would cause harm to him or anyone else. No, they would need to do something else but at the moment, Rowena could think of nothing. She looked to Walden.

‘Get Bella here, now.’



Walden walked away from both of them and he did something which Rowena could not see. It didn't take long for Bella to join them. She walked into the room with her head held high and her shoulders back. Her icy cold grey eyes looked around the room and examined everyone within it. She approached Rowena and knelt at her feet before getting up and nodded her head once.

'Why am I here, my Lord?' she asked politely.

'We need some information from Aberforth here and I was hoping you would help.'

'I would be honoured,' said Bella bowing slightly.

She took her wand out and approached Aberforth with precise and calculated steps. Her eyes narrowed and he pointed her wand stiffly. 'Crucio!' she said excitedly.

The spell hit Aberforth in the stomach and his body instantly fell to the ground and he shook with uncontrollable pain. Rowena knew he wanted to call out and she would end this, when he was ready to talk to her. On the sixth round of the curse, Aberforth was unable to stand up on his own. Rowena watched him struggle and she felt guilty but she wanted to get into Hogwarts.

Aberforth fell down on his behind and he grunted heavily. His blue eyes looked at Rowena with great hatred. 'I've only ever tried to help you,' he yelled. 'Whenever Albus was bugging you who did you turn to? Me and when you fought with Albus about not attending Hogwarts, you wrote to me and I came over straight away and helped you, and when you wrote to me telling me you want to meet your mother, I believed you and gave you her work address, and what did you end up doing? You murdered her!'

'It was an accident,' said Rowena quietly.

'You're a fucking liar,' Aberforth screamed at her. His face was full of rage. He was livid, his blue eyes widening in horror. 'You never cared about anyone but yourself.'

‘I do care about you and Albus,’ she said, her voice even quieter. ‘But you could end this-’

‘If you really cared, you wouldn’t do this. Albus loves you, he raised you and this is how you’re going to repay him.’

‘I owe him nothing,’ shouted Rowena. She felt anger begin to boil within her.

‘He took you in as a baby,’ said Aberforth. ‘How many other people would have done that once they found out who you were. Albus thought if he raised you that you’d be different, that he could change you but he was wrong. I will admit that I thought it a mistake when he first told me about you and that he had taken you home with him. Maybe he felt bad about Ariana, I don’t know.’

When Ariana’s name was mentioned Rowena immediately looked to Ariana’s portrait. Her blonde hair had become like a curtain around her face, hiding it. She was sobbing slightly, sitting on the floor of her frame. Rowena pushed her guilty feelings aside.

‘Your sister’s death has nothing to do with me and I do appreciate Albus taking me in but it was his choice. He knew perfectly well who my father was and he simply forgot to tell him until I was seventeen, how do you think I felt about that? Do you think I liked it? I vomited when he first told me who I really was. I wanted to end it, to change and become a different person but after certain events, I realised that I couldn’t change who I was born to be. This is the person I am and nothing and no one can change that.’

‘What certain events?’ asked Aberforth, calming slightly.

‘Right now they are irrelevant,’ said Rowena, dismissingly. ‘You could end this right now by telling me how to get into Hogwarts.’

‘What do you plan on doing in there?’ he asked after a moment of thought. He was considering his options.

‘Not much,’ replied Rowena enigmatically. ‘Maybe ruffle a few feathers, take a few people, create some havoc, you know, the usual.’

‘Murder more innocent people?’ spat Aberforth.

‘No, I don’t plan on anyone dying while we are there, but if someone gets in the way, well, that cannot be helped,’ she said quietly.

Aberforth looked away from Rowena. He seemed torn about what to do. He knew if he told Rowena nothing and didn’t tell her what she wanted to know, then the torture would get worse and repetitive, and he didn’t want that. All he wanted was for Rowena to give herself up but he knew that would never happen. There could be other ways around it though.

‘Fine, I’ll give you a way in,’ said Aberforth eventually. ‘But you have to promise to get in and out quickly and not kill anyone.’

Rowena paced the room for a long moment as she thought about his offer. It was a good one. She would be able to get into Hogwarts, roam around, get what she wanted and get back out; hopefully before anyone noticed that she and her followers had been there. When she had made her decision she stood in front of Aberforth again and looked down at him, her light brown eyes blazing lightly.

‘Alright, we have an agreement,’ she said quietly. ‘Now tell me, how do I get into Hogwarts?’

Aberforth was silent but his blue eyes wandered over to the portrait of Ariana. Rowena looked too before giving Aberforth a questioning look. He sighed softly. ‘Behind her portrait is a tunnel and it leads to the room of requirement.’

‘Really?’ asked Rowena curiously.

She knew it leading to the room of requirement was a good thing. It was the best place to be and she already had the plan worked out in her mind. She looked to Bella. ‘Tie him up, gag him and bring him with us,’ she said indicating Aberforth.

Bella nodded once and she as Rowena said. It all happened so quickly that Aberforth barely had time to challenge what Rowena had said. Bella tied me up tightly and gagged him well, so well that he could barely make a sound. Rowena looked at Bella. She was smiling madly. She was immensely proud of herself.

Rowena shook her head unnoticeably and she went back to the table and sat down. 'We shall wait until dark to leave. Walden, put a closed sign on the front door outside and make sure you are not seen.'

Walden bowed and quickly left the room and reappearing within seconds and he returned to his place. Bella stood beside Aberforth, guarding him. Rowena watched. When she thought about it now, she must have misjudged Bella before. Bella was cruel and sadistic, that was true, but there was another side and Rowena was sure that no one had ever seen it. She appeared happy as she peered down at Aberforth.

When darkness fell over the village, Rowena led the way out of the bar and Bella followed with Aberforth and Walden followed behind them. They all walked away from the village and out of sight before they even dared trying to disapparate.

When they arrived at their destination, they checked the area before going back to the manor. Once inside she looked to Bella. 'Place him in a cell and then call all Death Eaters to the lounge room. It's time for another meeting.'

'Why are we here?' said Rabastan loudly when all Death Eaters were in the room.

The other Death Eaters looked at Rabastan. He was shifting uncomfortably in his chair and he seemed annoyed or irritated by something. Bella was sitting on his right and his grasped his hand tightly with her own. Their eyes met and for some reason Rabastan stopped his squirming.

'I'm sure she'll be here soon,' said Bella tightly. 'We must respect her.'

'Why?' asked Amycus brashly.

'Crucio!'

The spell came from beyond the doorway and it hit Amycus in the back. A small scream left his lips and he fell from his chair, and began to wriggle in pain on the floor. Rowena came into view and she walked to Amycus, taking her time. She looked down at him. She watched for a moment before lifting the spell.

Once it was gone Amycus curled up into a ball on the floor. Aleto stood up but one look from Rowena made her freeze. She looked down at Amycus again.

'Why you ask. Well, let me tell you,' said Rowena softly and slowly. 'You followed my father mostly without question and once he died I took his place. I did offer for someone else to do it but no one would, so I did. I did expect some respect from everyone and I am beginning to learn that some people don't like me being in charge.'

She looked to Rabastan. 'Isn't that right?'

'No, my Lord,' said Rabastan quickly. 'It's just that you call a meeting and you don't turn up on time.'

'It is my meeting, is it not?'

'Yes, I suppose so,' he said quietly.

'Then I do not think I will hear any more complaints from you.' Rowena walked to her seat and sat down. She looked around the table.

'Alright,' said Rowena softly. 'I think it's now time I told you what I have planned. I know of a way to get into Hogwarts, and it's the reason Aberforth is here. I do not want him hurt, killed or injured in any way. Once we get back out of Hogwarts I plan on letting Aberforth go.'

‘Why are we going to Hogwarts?’ asked Avery, confused.

‘I will admit I don’t know much about Hogwarts. I was hoping someone would enlighten me.’ She looked around the table and her eyes fell on Draco and friends. ‘Theodore, why don’t you tell me about it since you haven’t been out long.’

‘Okay,’ he said quietly. He took a moment to think what to say and as he did so, Rowena took out her wand and conjured a quill and some parchment. She put a small spell on the quill for it to write down everything Theodore said. ‘Well, it’s huge for starters. There are four houses which students can be sorted into and they have their own house ghost. The dorm rooms for each house are in a different location.’

Theodore paused but Rowena urged him to continue. ‘I want to hear everything you can tell me,’ she said.

Theodore nodded. Rowena loved how confident he seemed. He seemed unafraid of Rowena but he seemed uncertain about what to tell her. He sat up straighter in his chair and entwined his fingers together, resting them on the table.

‘The Slytherin common room is located in the dungeons, the Ravenclaw house is located on the west side of the castle, the Gryffindor house is located on the seventh floor and the Hufflepuff house, we aren’t sure, but we think it’s near the kitchens.

‘We have the Astronomy tower, which is the tallest one and it is surrounded by a parapet. There is also the headmaster’s office which is also located on the seventh floor. It has a gargoyle protecting it and you need a password to get it to move aside. We also have the north tower, where Divination class is held.’

Theodore paused again, trying to think of more to say. ‘The Owlery is in the west tower, the greenhouses are in the gardens, behind the sheds. We have a sorting hat, it chooses where each student must go and the hat thinks and talks. The gamekeeper, Hagrid, his hut is on the school grounds, not far from the edge of the forbidden forest.

‘There are also many secret passages throughout Hogwarts. The largest room would probably be the Great Hall which is near the entrance hall on the first floor. The room of requirement that I've heard rumours about would be located on the fifth floor. The library is on the second floor. The Quidditch pitch is right down on side of the grounds.

‘There's also the Whomping Willow. It's a giant tree that attacks you if you get too close. Uniforms are all the same, except for house colours on it. We have prefects, chosen in the fifth year and the seventh years get one head boy and head girl. I forgot, most house towers have a password.

‘In the kitchen there are hundreds of house-elves working and cooking, though I am not sure how to get into the kitchens. There are bathrooms on each floor and in each corridor there are portraits, paintings and you'll find some tapestries and statues.

‘There is also the Black Lake, where the giant squid lives and the Forbidden Forest which I mentioned before.’

Theodore stopped talking and Rowena was still looking at him. She knew it was a lot but he broke it down quite well. She had some questions to ask first though. ‘How many teachers in the school?’

‘A few,’ Theodore replied. ‘Do you want all of their names?’

‘Yes.’

Rowena looked at the parchment she conjured earlier. Everything had been recorded down. She looked at Theodore again and he continued talking.

‘Well, there was Professor Snape, who taught Potions and then Defence Against the Dark Arts and was head of Slytherin house. Professor McGonagall taught transfiguration and she's head of Gryffindor house. Professor Flitwick, the charms teacher and head of Ravenclaw house. Professor Sprout, Herbology teacher and head of Hufflepuff house. Professor Babbling, she taught Ancient Runes. Professor Binns, who is a ghost, he teaches History of Magic.

Professor Trelawney teaches Divination, though in our fifth year she was sacked and Dumbledore brought in Firenze, a centaur, to take over the subject.'

Theodore paused to take a deep breath before continuing. 'There is also the gamekeeper Hagrid, he's been teaching Care of Magical Creatures since our third year. Madam Hooch, though now deceased, was the flying instructor. Professor Sinistra, the Astronomy teacher. Professor Slughorn, our Potions teacher and there is Professor Vector, who teaches Arithmancy.'

'And the other staff?' asked Rowena.

'Well, there's Madam Pomfrey, she's the schools nurse and there is Argus Filch, he's the caretaker. His cat, Mrs. Norris, helps him do the rounds,' replied Theodore calmly.

'Mrs. Norris?' questioned Rowena sceptically.

Theodore nodded and there were a few sniggers around the table. Rowena could hardly believe that that was the cat's name. Rowena nodded her head thoughtfully. She knew this had to be thought out in great detail and she knew she would have to take some time to make sure it was done right.

When the meeting ended it was late and Rowena returned to her bed chambers with Walden. He followed her into the room and closed the door and he guarded it. Rowena walked over to the wardrobe and looked through it, what she was looking for she couldn't remember.

She straightened up and looked at Walden. He was watching her. Rowena suddenly felt awkward and self conscious. She didn't want him looking at her like that. She took her wand out of her pocket and placed it on the bedside table before looking at Walden again.

'You can go and join the others,' she said quietly, turning to get changed into her pyjamas.

'I'm fine here,' he replied.



Rowena looked at him again and her eyes narrowed slightly. What did he want? 'No, I think you should be with the others and have some fun,' she said forcefully.

Walden looked as though he wanted to argue. Rowena was going to have none of this. She had an idea about what he wanted but Rowena didn't want to give it the chance of happening. She wasn't interested in anyone. She was more than happy to remain a virgin. Being that close to someone did not interest her. It seemed like a bad thing to do with someone.

Walden eventually agreed to do what Rowena said and he left the room. Rowena finished changing into her bed clothes and she lay down and she found it rather easy to fall asleep.

A few months later, on the first of September Rowena and the Death Eaters slithered through Hogsmeade and went straight to the Hogs Head. They all went upstairs and Rowena walked straight over to the portrait of Ariana. Ariana was standing on the side of the frame. She looked very uninterested in what Rowena was doing and what she wanted.

Rowena took out her wand and made an action with her head for Ariana to move but she didn't. She stuck her tongue out at Rowena and crossed her arms over her chest looking sullen. Rowena then nodded to Dolohov who brought Aberforth forwards. That made Ariana pay attention.

Her arms fell to her sides and her eyes filled with tears. 'Nothing will happen to Aberforth, all you have to do is let us through.'

Ariana's eyes moved between Rowena and Aberforth rapidly. He nodded to her and Ariana nodded back. She still didn't seem pleased but she walked down her portrait and it seemed to turn into a tunnel with a small hole at the other end.

'Alright, let's go,' said Rowena firmly. 'And remember take the person I have instructed you to and remember if you see the Dark Mark or hear the spell for it, then leave, it's the sign for everyone to retreat.'

And this might sound strange, but try not to murder everyone and don't take someone we don't need.'

She looked them over and nodded once. 'Alright, let's go.'

They all clambered through the frame and the Death Eaters followed, Walden directly behind Rowena. Dolohov remained the room for a moment and tied him to the bed. 'If you behave we'll let you go when we're finished,' he said viciously.

Once through the portrait Rowena looked around. The room of requirement was empty. She saw a door pop up and she eyed it carefully.

'Won't the Order be here?' asked Alecto, after a long stretch of silence.

Most people were looking around the room but Rowena was standing in the middle of the room with Walden and she answered Alecto's question. 'No, I doubt it, but I'm sure Albus is here and once he learns we're here, he'll call on the teachers to help as well as the Order.'

'How can you be certain?' asked Amycus, who moved to stand beside his sister.

'Because Albus is a fool,' she said bitterly. 'And he's predicable. He'll want to protect the students at all costs and he knows that the Order will coming running if he tells them too.'

Rowena began to pace around in a small circle while Walden watched. Rowena was starting to think that this wasn't such a good idea. She felt queasy and her stomach felt like it had been tied up in knots. She definitely wasn't feeling sure about this. It seemed brash and impulsive. That's not how Rowena would describe herself.

She stopped pacing and took a deep breath. They were already here, it would be foolish to not do anything now and she didn't want to look foolish in front of the Death Eaters. More and more she was learning that now they weren't sure about her taking over from her father. In the beginning, Rowena had wondered if it was the best thing to do.

She wasn't that experienced when it came to magic. She was sure there were some people that would be better to run things than her. A small part of her was surprised that Bella wasn't chosen to lead. She was her father's number two, well, she must have been before Rowena arrived on the scene. And Bella was... impulsive to say the least but maybe Bella was a little too out there for the rest of the Death Eaters.

Rowena gathered the Death Eaters together. They knew where to go and what each of them had to. Rowena wanted to see if Remus would show up. He was one person she wanted captured, though it would matter if he wasn't. She wasn't completely sure why but there was always something about him that she didn't like.

She watched the Death Eaters leave the room and Rowena checked the time. It was about six, so, it must be dinner time. 'Down to the Great Hall,' she whispered to Walden, who nodded his agreement.

She needed to set things in motion. She wondered if it would be possible to lock everyone in the Great Hall but she knew it would never hold and even if it did it would only give them a short amount of time. Rowena was hoping that if she and Walden went to the Great Hall they could stir up some panic.

When they made it to the entrance hall Rowena felt excited. Her nervous and worries about this were now gone. They walked silent over to the double doors. Being here, Rowena now wished she had chosen to go here instead of Durmstrang, but the down side was that Albus worked here. The inside of the castle was beautiful, magnificent actually.

They reached the double doors to discover them open. Both Rowena and Walden peered inside. The whole school seemed to be in there and Albus was at the front, talking about something. Rowena wasn't listening. Rowena nudged Walden and he sent a green spark high into the air, above the heads of the students in the hall.

Many gasps went around the hall and everyone eventually turned to look at the doors, where Rowena and Walden were standing, the same evil grin painted across their faces.

'Hello, Albus, nice to see you again!' she shouted, her voice bouncing off the walls.

As soon as she saw Albus reach for his wand, both Rowena and Walden ran off, Rowena cackling loudly. She heard many footsteps and many shouts of fear and panic. Rowena couldn't help but smile triumphantly. It was exactly what she wanted. She and Walden ran back up to the fifth floor and they waited near the entrance to the room of requirement.

Walden had told her that he wasn't happy about her sacrificing herself. He kept telling her this was the Death Eaters job but Rowena like going along with them. She was able to make sure nothing went wrong, to see things happen for herself, without being told by someone else.

They could hear many explosions and shouting below them. It didn't take long for some Death Eaters to run past them and make their way to the seventh floor. When a few Order members chased them Walden covered himself and Rowena and they ran past without noticing anyone but once they came back into sight someone was waiting for them and it was one of the people that Rowena wanted to see.

## Chapter Twenty-Seven - Prisoners

Rowena's eyes widened in happiness. She found herself face to face with Remus. It was just the person she wanted to see. She smiled widely.

'Hello, Remus.'

'I knew you'd be here?' said Remus tightly.

'In Hogwarts? Wow, you are clever aren't you...?'

She giggled and it only seemed to make Remus angrier. It was what she wanted, for him to be angry. He might not be able to concentrate as hard in all of his anger and hatred towards her.

'NO,' he shouted at her. 'I knew you that if you ever got into Hogwarts, it would be through the room of requirement and I also knew that you would fight yourself and I knew that you would want to keep this floor guarded, though I did anticipate there being more of you here.'

Rowena's expression didn't change. 'Well done, Remus and to get here I'm sure you were already here. Teaching again, are we?'

'No,' said Remus quietly. 'I was here with Tonks and Teddy, just visiting the school.'

Rowena frowned faintly but it disappeared quickly. Why would he be coming here with his wife and son? Was he afraid for their safety? She was sure that he was but she just couldn't understand why he would bring them here.

'Expelliarmus,' Remus shouted at Rowena.

Walden flicked his wand and the spell deflected away from her. Remus was becoming less and less happy. 'Why not fight me yourself instead of letting your bodyguard do it?'

'Why don't you fight Walden and then if you win, I'll duel you,' Rowena retorted back.

It was obvious that Remus didn't like the sound of that. Walden was a big man. In the right situation, Rowena knew he could be scary and intimidating. Right now, his blue eyes were glowing with fury and hatred at Remus. Rowena thought she could almost feel the heat radiating off Walden's body. For some reason, it excited her.

Walden stepped towards Remus. 'Come on, wolfy, give it your best shot,' he taunted.

This angered Remus further. He whipped his wand out to the ready and Walden did the same thing. Their duel began and Rowena took stunned step backwards. She hadn't expected it to be that furious. Spells and curses went in all directions from both men and the lights from it bounced between walls, clashing with each other.

It ended how Rowena expected it too. When choosing a protector, she had chosen well. Walden had won and the last spell had sent Remus flying to the other side of the room, wandless. He hit the wall and groaned loudly. Walden chuckled appreciatively. Rowena knew he was quite proud of himself.

Rowena walked over to Remus and looked down at him. 'I had hoped better from you,' she said very softly. Rowena lifted her wand but nothing happened as a screech came from around the corner and four Death Eaters came running into view. Rowena moved and they stopped in front of her kneeling.

'My Lord...' it was Alecto's voice. 'Many more Order members are here, and some students are fighting also. You said no one was to die. I think now is the time to leave.'

Rowena thought it through but it didn't take long for her to make a decision. 'I agree. Go to the window and send the Dark Mark, now.'

Alecto did as she was told and ran to an open window and throwing her arm into the air. 'Morsmordre!'

The bang issued from Alecto's wand and the sky lit up an emerald green and a skull appeared instantly with a snake crawling inside and

out. Alecto smiled at it before going back. Rowena had moved and she quickly got the room of requirement back open. The four Death Eaters that came running around the corner went in when Rowena allowed them and they started getting the portrait hole to the Hogs Head open again.

Rowena and Walden waited outside in the corridor for more people to arrive. Walden now seemed agitated. 'My Lord, I suggest you go in there and wait for us at the Hogs Head,' he yelled as sudden screaming came tumbling their way.

Rowena couldn't agree more quickly with Walden and she went into the room of requirement while Walden waited in the corridor, holding the door open so they wouldn't have to look for it again. Rowena ran into the room and just when she reached the other Death Eaters the portrait opened up and they all ran inside and sped to the other end.

Once there Rowena looked around immediately. Aberforth was still there, tied to the bed. Rowena sighed in relief. He was still there. She closed all shades and curtains even though it was dark. She didn't want anyone to even have a chance to see them. They had to wait for almost an hour before almost everyone had joined them, some people were holding victims and hostages.

Rowena looked around. 'There are many people missing,' she shouted as Walden came through the portrait and closed it.

'Yeah, I know,' he said, panting heavily. 'And I don't think they're in any condition to join us right now!'

Without much thinking, Rowena and the Death Eaters left the Hogs Head in a panic. They fled the town, not caring who saw them right now as Rowena was sure Remus may have told them how they got in and where they would be now. But as Rowena ran a thought came to her, how many people knew about the portrait in the Hogs Head leading the room of requirement? Rowena was sure Aberforth wouldn't tell many people, though Albus may know.

Once outside the small village everyone disappeared to the same place. The manor appeared before them instantly and everyone

clambered inside. Most people filed into the living room, defeated and tired. Rowena hadn't thought that the raid had lasted that long but, of course; she didn't actually know what happened and what they encountered.

She walked to the living room entrance and stood in the doorway, with Walden next to her. Rowena eyed him though; she thought he was standing a little too close. She eyed the other Death Eaters in the room with slight contempt, it was becoming increasingly hard not to. Her eyes then went to the people that had been captured tonight. There were more than Rowena expected.

She looked the other people over. She only recognised some of them, Bill, Fleur and Charlie but the others remained a mystery to her. One of them looked to be around eighteen years old, and he had blonde hair and pale eyes. He looked scared but defiant. Another person was female, old with grey hair, but she looked to be a kind woman and another person was female. She looked to be older than Rowena, though probably not by much and the last person...

The last person was a small boy. He looked to be around three years old. Rowena noticed his hair kept changing colour and he had his small hands to his mouth and his eyes were wide as he looked around. He was scared, terrified probably and Rowena didn't blame him, but she wondered, who brought a small child and why?

The small child backed away from everyone in the room and into a corner. The child's blue eyes were shining with tears and Rowena felt a shiver go down her spine when she heard a low growl echo the room. She knew it was Greyback. When he came into view, Rowena watched him advance on the child and the small child was obviously scared of Greyback as he screamed at the sight of him.

Greyback continued to advance and everyone in the room just watched as the child screamed and cried more while attempting to move further into the corner. Rowena wondered what the hell she was standing there for.

She rushed over and just before Greyback could swipe at the child she placed herself between them. Greyback snarled at the loss of his



prey. He growled at Rowena but she held her ground. 'I'm not about to let you rip an innocent child apart.'

'This child is Lupin's son,' Greyback snarled at her.

Walden approached them and he looked between them but he ultimately chose Rowena, since he was protecting her and he pointed his wand at Greyback. 'Back off.'

Greyback growled low in his throat but he eventually conceded. He moved away, though never taking his eyes off Lupin's child. The thought ran through Rowena's mind. This was Lupin's child? How is that possible? Rowena thought he would have been protected from something, anything like this. Rowena looked at the child. He was now sitting on the floor, covering his face and still crying.

'What is his name?' she asked quietly.

'We're not sure,' said Narcissa. Rowena turned to look at her. It was the only time she had spoken to her. She was standing beside her husband, holding his arm for support. 'But we believe his name's Teddy, or Ted.'

'Teddy,' repeated Rowena, silently. She knew his name but it had escaped her.

She bent down and faced Teddy. She reached out her arms and spoke to the child softly. 'Teddy, come here, darling.'

Teddy sniffled and looked up at the person speaking to him. Compared to the rest she seemed alright, as he very slowly moved from the corner and into Rowena's arms. She thought it was going to be much harder than that. She held him to her tightly and left the room and carried him upstairs to her bed chambers. She was alone. Walden had not followed.

She sat down on the bed and placed Teddy on her lap. He still seemed scared but Rowena was sure he preferred her to anyone else out there. 'It's Ok little one, no one will hurt you,' she said softly,

while stroking Teddy's now red hair. Rowena frowned at him. How was he doing that?

Once Teddy had settled Rowena placed him on the floor and conjured some toys for him to play with. When seeing the toys Teddy wanted nothing more than to get to them. Rowena frowned but also smiled faintly as she watched how eager and excited he was. He started to play and Rowena decided to go back downstairs and finish the meeting.

But when she reached the door she stopped and turned around to face the room. Her eyes landed on Teddy. Why did she just do that? Why was she protecting Remus' son? She wasn't sure. She knew she hated werewolves though she never let it show. So why was she now protecting a half-werewolf? Was it because he didn't have the transforming gene?

Rowena didn't know what the answer was. Sure, she hated Remus, and he had never trusted her... but was the reason that she could show Remus that she had his son? She left the room and went back into the living room. She eyed Walden but said nothing. She took a seat at the head of the table and once she was seated everyone else sat down too.

'Was the Hogwarts nurse captured? Is that Madam Pomfrey?' she asked pointing to the grey haired lady.

'Yes,' said Bella triumphantly.

'Good,' said Rowena. She looked at Madam Pomfrey. 'Do you have a first name?'

'Poppy,' the woman replied tentatively.

'Poppy,' Rowena repeated. 'Alright. We're not going to kill you, but we do have to disarm you. I'm hoping you'll become our nurse.'

'W-why?' she asked.

‘Because Severus is no longer with us,’ said Rowena tightly. ‘And we need someone else and I thought you wouldn’t mind.’

Poppy nodded. Rowena knew she wouldn’t be much trouble. There was no intention on killing her. Rowena just wanted someone with healing experiences. She knew they could try a hospital but that would have been extremely hard to get into.

‘Who did we lose?’ asked Rowena looking around.

It was Walden that answered her. ‘We lost Goyle Snr, he was killed by Snape.

‘And who did the Order lose?’ asked Rowena, trying to move on.

‘The Order and Hogwarts, I suppose, lost Madam Pince, she’s the librarian at Hogwarts and killed by Amycus and they lost their gamekeeper Hagrid. He was killed by eight of us.’

‘It took eight of you?’ asked Rowena, checking to make sure she heard him correctly.

‘Yes, he’s half-giant,’ spat Walden. ‘It was always going to be hard to get rid of him.’

‘But why killed him? I thought Hagrid wasn’t that intelligent anyway?’

‘Well, that may be true,’ said Walden airily. ‘But we know Harry and Dumbledore, and maybe other people have a big, soft spot for Hagrid and I’m sure losing him will be devastating.’

‘Alright,’ said Rowena. She wanted to move on again. ‘What happened to make people come running back?’

‘The Order,’ replied Rookwood. ‘Many more members arrived and even the teachers and some students went up against us. It became overwhelming, especially since we were split up and our numbers are thinning.’

'I know,' said Rowena quietly. She took a deep breath before standing up. 'This meetings over. Everyone go and get some rest.'

She left the room before anything more could be said and she returned to her room. Walden appeared not long afterwards and he stayed in the room with him. Walden was frowning but he said nothing. He just remained standing at the door but his silence wouldn't hold.

Rowena walked to her bed and sat down and she began to watch Teddy as he continued to play. She made Walden leave and get some food and drink for him, which he did. As he set it down upon the small table in the room, Walden walked over and stood in front of Rowena. She looked up at him.

'My Lord,' he said firmly, but quietly. 'Why look after this child?'

Rowena searched Walden's blue eyes and she shrugged lightly. 'I am not sure,' she replied. 'He only looks about three years old. How can I kill a child of that age? This child is innocent. He deserves to be protected. He doesn't deserve to be ripped apart by Greyback.'

'He should never have been born in the first place though,' said Walden tightly.

'I know,' agreed Rowena. 'But it's not the child's fault. Remus should have known better than to get Tonks pregnant but I'm sure she didn't want to get rid of it.'

She saw the look on Walden's face. 'And I know I don't like Remus, but this is his son, it's not Remus. What would you have me do with him?'

Walden shrugged. He seemed conflicted. He fell to his knees and looked up at Rowena, his blue eyes shining. 'My Lord,' she said faintly. 'I do not want to see you fall.'

Walden lifted his hands and placed them on top of Rowena's who flinched at the contact. 'Don't touch me,' she hissed.

‘Please, my Lord,’ he said desperately. ‘I know you have no interest and I wish I could say the same but I cannot. I need to be close to you. I like being close to you. I-’

‘I suggest you end this at once!’ said Rowena loudly.

With her legs she pushed Walden away and she stood up, walking to the other side of the room. ‘Grow up,’ she said loudly. ‘Or I shall be forced to find someone else to protect me. Do your job and concentrate on it.’

Walden got to his feet, he was defeated. It would take more than this to get through to her. He needed her. Why? He didn’t know. But out of all the women he has seen in his life, this was the first one to bring him to attention at all times. Rowena had a certain power, though she was unaware of it. Walden wondered how many other Death Eaters felt the same thing.

He looked over at Rowena. She had turned her back on him and she was looking out the window. She was beautiful and yet Walden knew if he told her this, she would surely punish him. He had thought about it many times. He was sure she had never been with someone but he always wondered why. She was pretty and Walden was sure Rowena didn’t notice anything.

He walked from the room and once his footsteps could no longer be heard Rowena turned back around. She looked at Teddy who had now stopped playing and had found his own way to the food. Rowena looked at the closed bedroom door. What was Walden playing at? She wasn’t interested in him or anyone else. She had never seen Walden like that before and she didn’t want to.

As Dumbledore walked through Hogsmeade and made his way up to the Hogs Head, he stopped. He was interested to know how Rowena and friends got into the castle. He didn’t think his brother would have something to do with it but he wanted to check. He looked the pub over. All the windows had been covered up and there was closed sign still on the door. Something wasn’t right.

Dumbledore walked to the front door and tapped with his wand. It opened easily. He poked his head inside and looked around. There was no one. He entered the pub and looked around the ground floor. When his eyes hit the stairs he looked around them. Nothing appeared out of the ordinary. He walked up the stairs, each one creaking as he went.

When at the top, he walked straight to the sitting area, where he knew his brother sometimes slept. His eyes widened at what he saw. His brother was tied and gagged on the floor. He wasn't moving. Dumbledore whipped his wand around, making the rope and gag disappear but it changed nothing. She moved forwards quickly and checked his brother's neck.

There was still a pulse. His face almost shined with happiness and relief mixed together. He moved quickly and grabbed Aberforth and he disappeared, taking both of them to St. Mungo's. He entered the emergency entrance and they were both immediately taken to a room. Dumbledore only stayed for five minutes with his brother before returning to headquarters. Another meeting was needed.

At Grimmauld Place when Dumbledore arrived, he found most Order members already there. He entered the kitchen and most people jumped up, maybe expecting an enemy. They sat back down. Dumbledore didn't remember people this jumpy when Voldemort was in charge.

He walked to the table and opened his mouth but Molly beat him to it. 'Where have you been?' she screeched. 'The meeting was supposed to take place an hour ago.'

When Molly finished Dumbledore sighed and looked at her calmly, his voice betraying the same emotion. 'I know but something has happened. I believe I know how Rowena and friends got into Hogwarts.'

'From the room of requirement,' said Hermione interrupting him.

Dumbledore smiled faintly. 'Yes, but they got there from the Hogs Head.'

Most people exchanged glances of shock. No one understood what Dumbledore was talking about. Arthur stood up. 'What do you mean? How did that happen?'

Dumbledore sighed again. 'Maybe I should have revealed this before but Aberforth has a secret passage in his sitting room at the Hogs Head which leads to the room of requirement.'

'What?!' shouted Molly, standing up next to her husband. 'When did you plan telling us this?'

'Never,' replied Dumbledore honestly.

'Why?' asked Harry, quietly. He and many others in the room were confused about this. Everything seemed to get weirder and weirder.

'I never thought Rowena would go after Aberforth. She got along with him well.'

'Well,' said Molly as calmly as possible, her voice still shaking slightly. 'You didn't think Rowena was capable of many things and look where it's got us.'

She left the room and her husband followed. There was another loud noise from a chair being kicked over. It was Remus. 'And what about my son, Albus?' he said angrily. 'Rowena has him and...'

His voice broke and he walked away from the group and kept his back to them as a few tears ran down his face. He still wasn't clear on how Teddy was able to be taken but he knew Tonks had been attacked. Remus was scared. Greyback was still around and Rowena, who hated werewolves, now had his son.

Most people looked around at each other, they had never really seen Remus like this. Sirius stood up from his chair calmly and he walked over to Remus and spoke to him quietly.

'Teddy will be fine.'

'No, he won't be,' said Remus loudly. 'Rowena hates werewolves-'

'But Teddy isn't a werewolf,' said Ron, interrupting.

Remus turned and faced them, his face still wet. 'I know,' he said forcefully. 'But Teddy is still half-werewolf...'

His voice failed again and he fled from the room. When most people had left, Harry was one of the last to leave the room. He went into the backyard and looked around. The night sky was clear and the stars were twinkling brightly.

Harry thought it would be over by now but it seemed Rowena had other ideas. Harry didn't want it to take another seventeen years again for this all to end. His chest felt heavy from guilt though he had nothing to feel guilty about. He walked over to an outside table and chairs and he sat down. He removed his glasses and rubbed his face with his hands before smoothing over his hair.

He placed his glasses back on his nose and he looked down at his hands. Harry felt tired. This was supposed to be over with. He felt old, older than he should feel and older than he actually was. Everyone had been through more than anyone one person should. He felt angry though it never showed through anymore. Harry felt so much hatred when Voldemort was around, he was having trouble doing the same thing with Rowena. It wasn't the same person. She wasn't Voldemort.

Back at Rowena's manor, things were quiet. Not much had yet happened since they returned from Hogwarts. Rowena had planned on another meeting but nothing had yet taken place. Rowena was sick of meetings already. She wondered if the need to discuss things was that great.

Right now, she was outside, in the backyard of the manor. What she needed right now was fresh air and nothing else. She had noticed Walden wasn't with her and it was his job but Rowena decided to ignore it this time. She wondered if she had said something wrong, or something that made him upset or angry though she would have thought he'd say something instead of keeping it in.



She walked around the yard, which was quite a walk in its own right. By the time she reached the back door, she could no longer hear anything. The house appeared to have become silent, almost too silent. She walked inside and down the hallways until she reached the living room. All of her followers were there. They had been whispering and as soon as she came into view, it stopped.

Rowena remained in the doorway and she looked at everyone in the room. 'What's going on here?' she asked quietly.

No one answered her. Rowena looked to Walden, he had his eyes focusing on something else, as did most of them. She looked them all over again.

'I won't say it again, what is going on here?'

Dolohov was the only one that stepped forwards. He knelt at Rowena's feet before getting up and looking her directly in the eyes. 'My Lord,' he said softly. 'We have been wondering this for a while but no one has asked. Are there rules for us here?'

'What do you mean?' asked Rowena. She was a little confused.

Dolohov's expression did not change. 'My Lord,' he repeated. 'We are wondering if there are things we can and cannot do while under your command.'

'Is there something everyone is asking for?' she asked slowly.

'Yes,' replied Dolohov and he got straight to the point. 'Most of us here are frustrated, sexually and we are wondering if the prisoners may be used to relieve that.'

Rowena sighed inwardly and wondered what to say to that. 'Did my father allow that?'

'Yes,' said Dolohov quickly. 'He let us, whenever we pleased and sometimes he liked to hold meetings especially for that purpose. For everyone to watch,' he added.

Rowena wondered if she should be disgusted by that but she could also picture it happening. She looked around at them. She knew they did have female prisoners here, maybe not enough to satisfy everyone but they could certainly be used for a certain purpose.

'I suppose they ... could be used for that, if you wish to,' said Rowena slowly. She was still unsure about it but she had also forgotten about the needs of her followers. She never indulged her own so it had never occurred to her. Some of them clapped and were visibly happy when they learnt they could use the prisoners, though Rowena didn't think it the correct response to the news, but she let them have it.

Rowena turned and left the room. She went down to the cells. She wanted to have a look at their prisoners herself. In one cell Bill, Fleur and Charlie were together. Rowena didn't know why but she was sure it didn't matter. In another cell was Alicia Spinnet. Rowena didn't know this girl, or anything about her but she didn't look much older than herself, maybe a few years difference.

The other person they brought here, Madam Pomfrey, wasn't in a cell. At the moment she was up in their medical room. She was told to help the sick and injured and make the necessary potions. She had been disarmed and she got straight to work. Rowena didn't expect any trouble from her. She seemed like a good and helpful person. Rowena had already decided to let her go when the time was right.

Rowena decided it was time to sleep. It was late and though she wasn't tired, she knew she needed some rest. The day had been long and Rowena was looking forward to it ending. When she entered her bed chambers, her eyes went to Teddy straight away. He was laying her bed, asleep, though he was lying in an awkward position. He was on his stomach, though it wasn't touching the bed and his bottom was sticking out and he head was on its side against the bed.

Rowena couldn't help herself. She chuckled loudly but quickly quietened herself. She didn't want to waken Teddy. It was better if he stayed asleep. Rowena changed into her bed clothes and she turned the table into another bed, though a single one. She didn't want to

wake Teddy up and then try to get him back to sleep. Rowena fell asleep thinking about the things that still had to be done.

## Chapter Twenty-Eight - Changes

When Rowena woke up the next morning, something was wrong. She sat up in almost sudden fright and she held the blanket up to her chin, the back of her hands turning whiter than normal and her eyes wide. It took a few seconds for her to realise that she was in her bed chambers, alone and the sound that had awoken her had not come from in here. Her eyes went to the door.

There was another loud sound. Rowena couldn't quite tell what was making it. She pulled the blankets off her body and she quickly changed into her black robes. She went to the top of the stairs and the noise was heard again. She frowned and walked down all sets of stairs until she reached the ground floor. It was then she heard voices, though from the tone she would have expected the words to be shouted or yelled.

'Let me at him!'

'No, you heard what our Lord said before; no one is to touch him.'

It was Greyback and Walden talking. Greyback sounded angry but he was obvious he didn't want to yell. Perhaps, so Rowena wouldn't hear them and come and see what was going on. When Rowena stopped Greyback the first time, she had the impression that he wasn't too happy about her protecting the child but it seemed he now understood.

She could hear Teddy crying. She walked to the doorframe of the room and she looked around. Teddy was standing against the side of the wall, crying into his hands and Greyback was leering at him, standing close but between them was Walden. Rowena had never seen his face that hard and serious before. He seemed intent of keeping Greyback away from the small, helpless child.

The first person to notice that Rowena was in the doorway was Bella. She cleared her throat loudly and it quickly got everyone's attention. Rowena thought Greyback would back down but he didn't. He eyes barely left Teddy. Rowena's patience with this was already wearing thin.

'I suggest you step away, Fenrir,' said Rowena in a quiet, serious tone.

A small growl rumbled in Greyback's throat. His eyes still did not move. Rowena's eyes narrowed and her arms seemed to fold themselves across her chest, her nostrils flared lightly. 'Move away,' she hissed.

Still, Greyback did not move. Rowena's patience was gone. She took her wand out from her pocket and pointed it at Greyback and she waited a few moments. He still did not move or say anything. Rowena was less than impressed right now. She commanded loyalty and respect and she seemed to be getting none from Greyback right now.

'Crucio!' shouted Rowena.

The curse hit Greyback hard and he instantly fell to the ground and writhed around in pain and agony. It was no more than he deserved. Teddy screamed louder but it was more his own good and Greyback's. When Rowena lifted the curse, Greyback stayed where he was. Her posture still hadn't changed. One member from Greyback's pack wanted to go over to him but Rowena held up a hand.

'Leave him.'

The command was obeyed. The female member stepped back but she looked down at Greyback in concern. Rowena glanced around the room again. There was someone else here. She saw Alicia sitting in the corner, sobbing quietly.

'Why is she here?'

'For some fun,' replied Yaxley.

Rowena nodded but said nothing more about it. She walked over to where Greyback still lay. 'Are you going to listen now?' she asked quietly. She didn't wait for an answer. 'I expect you to respect my

decisions and obey them like everyone else. Teddy is under my care and he is to be left alone! Is that understood?’

This time she did wait for an answer, and she didn’t have to wait long. Greyback looked up at Rowena with his dark grey eyes, his mouth was open and he appeared to be panting, his yellow teeth bared at her. ‘Very well,’ he growled.

Rowena could tell he was very unhappy but she didn’t care. She wanted Teddy unharmed, though the reason still eluded her. She cared nothing for Remus but this wasn’t Remus, it was his son, it was a different person. He was scared and in actual fact, he shouldn’t even be here.

‘Come here,’ Rowena said to Teddy. He moved from the wall nervously and made his way over to Rowena. She picked him up and took him back upstairs. Once in the room Rowena closed the door and she put Teddy down. His eyes went to the toys still on the floor and then back at Rowena.

‘Where’s mummy?’

Rowena turned sharply to face Teddy. He spoke. Rowena had expected him to because of his age but this was the first thing he had said. Though, she supposed it was because he was frightened and scared of everyone here. That made her wonder why he didn’t seem too scared of her. Maybe she was less scaring looking than everyone else.

Rowena turned back and sat on the bed and started to clean her wand. It had been a while since she had last done it. ‘Mummy isn’t here,’ she said quietly.

Teddy remained standing where he was. He bit his lower lip nervously. He looked to be on the verge of tears. ‘But ... then where’s daddy?’

‘He’s not here either,’ replied Rowena. ‘You have me and then will have to be enough for now. Now, go and play with your toys, like a good boy.’

She looked at Teddy, who hesitated before eventually moving over to his toys and sitting down though this time it took him longer to settle down and have any fun with them. When Rowena was sure he was settled, she decided to go downstairs and see Walden. There was something she wanted to say to him.

When she reached the ground floor she stopped in surprise. It was all different. She was only just here and now no one else was and it had turned dark. What happened? She was only here minutes ago. She took out her wand and looked around before moving. She went into the living room and it was even darker in there.

Rowena frowned heavily. What the hell was going on? She knew it was late but she thought everyone would still be down here.

‘Lumos,’ she whispered into the darkness.

Just as her wand lit up Rowena was hit from the side and knocked to the ground by something ... someone much larger than herself. She groaned and rubbed her arm before getting up but she was quickly knocked down again, this time hitting the side of her head on the floor. She yelled in agony and attempted to get up but she failed. She yelped as her wand was kicked out of her hand.

She was then hauled to her feet by her hair and she gasped through her teeth at the pain. Her wand was still lit where it lay on the floor. Rowena had thought it would turn off. In the small amount of light in the room she could see the face of the man holding her, Fenrir Greyback. He sneered at her, his teeth bared, glowing yellow from the light and his eyes shining with a maddening fury.

For the first time in a long time, Rowena felt fear flood through her veins. A look of pure panic and horror was etched in the faint lines now embedded on her face. A small amount of sweat grew on her forehead, around her hair line.

‘Let me go,’ she breathed.

‘Not any time soon,’ said Greyback hoarsely. ‘Since I cannot have the child, you're gonna have to do.’

He grabbed Rowena tightly by the arms and shoved her back into the wall. Rowena cried out and a few tears ran down her cheeks. She swung her legs, attempting to kick Greyback and she managed to several times but it was as if he felt nothing. He ignored it. He shook her and she yelped in surprise.

‘Where ... is everyone else?’ she wheezed.

‘Where they cannot help you,’ said Greyback lightly, then his voice turned vicious. ‘I'm gonna enjoy gutting you, ripping your flesh off with my teeth. Then I could have the child. We would no longer have to listen to you. I'm sure we could take on the Order without you.’

‘I don't,’ said Rowena, her breath catching in her throat.

Greyback brought his knee up sharply and it connected with Rowena's stomach. She cried out in pain and Greyback laughed evilly. More tears ran down Rowena's cheeks. She didn't want to die like this. She didn't want to be brought down by something she hated. She was better than this.

Greyback moved closer, so their bodies touched and he leaned in closer to Rowena. He buried his head into her neck and breathed in her scent before licking it, his tongue dry and rough. Rowena shut her eyes as it scraped along her skin. It was the most disgusting thing she had known yet.

‘Your scent and taste is ... exquisite,’ he said, his breathing was becoming heavier. Suddenly Rowena's body jerked on its own as she felt something run across her back. She felt no pain. She was having trouble looking away from the monster in front of her and she kept her eyes and mind on him. Nothing else seemed to matter right now.

The only reason why that Rowena could think of was that he was becoming excited. And she knew she was right when he pressed his body into hers, giving her an indication that he was indeed wanting her. Rowena lifted her arms and attempted to push him away but



nothing worked. He was much bigger and stronger than she. She knew in a physical fight that he would win.

‘Please,’ she begged.

Greyback just laughed. ‘Who would have thought it, the Dark Lord’s daughter, begging me? I wonder what your father would think of you now. You’re not much better than your mother.’

The words to Rowena didn’t register. She heard him talking but nothing went through. As Greyback licked his lips and moved to bite Rowena, the lights in the living room went on and gasps of shock echoed the room. Walden was there and he was quick to act.

‘Relashio!’

Greyback was blasted off his feet and forced to release Rowena, who fell to the floor heavily, and landing awkwardly. She was still conscious and she looked around her. There was blood pooling around her, she frowned inwardly. Where was all the blood coming from? She got her answer when she looked at her stomach. There were a few marks and they were bleeding steadily.

She grabbed her head as she tried to think straight. There was too much blood around her for it to be coming just from her stomach. She felt around her body with her hands and once she reached her back her eyes widened. There was something there. It hurt as her fingers circled it but she ignored it. She brought her hand around and saw blood smeared across her fingers.

Her hand began to shake as she stared at it. Elsewhere in the same room, no one seemed to pay much attention to Rowena as they all advanced on Greyback, Walden leading them. He was holding his wand tighter than ever and he looked down at Greyback with nothing short of complete contempt. His eyes blazing with blue fire, he lifted his wand and chained Greyback’s limbs together before shoving him into a corner roughly.

Once he was finished with him, he turned his attention to Rowena. He ran over and the other Death Eaters crowded around. Rowena had

still been staring at her hand, and her shaking had turned uncontrollable. Her eyes became watery and glassy. Walden gently knelt down beside her.

‘My Lord.’

He got no response. Rowena was still looking elsewhere, her mind racing and confused with what just happened. It felt like a large blur that felt like hours though it had only been a few minutes.

‘Rowena,’ said Walden firmer.

Rowena’s head shook slightly. She was wondering who spoke to her. She gradually turned her head and looked at Walden with a confused and questioning look. She showed him her hand before her shaking got the better of her and she collapsed on the floor.

‘Let’s get her to the medical room, quickly,’ he said to Bella.

Bella had been standing there, shocked at the scene that awaited her. She nodded feebly when Walden spoke to her and she picked up Rowena’s legs as Walden pick her up by the shoulders. Together, they carried her to the medical room. The only person currently in there was Madam Pomfrey, who jumped noticeably when the door opened.

They put Rowena on the bed and Walden gave her a serious look. ‘She is to be treated now. You do everything you can to get her back to normal,’ he said firmly.

Madam Pomfrey nodded and got to work immediately. Walden and Bella left the room quietly and went back to the living room. Walden wasn’t yet finished with Greyback.

Four Years Later:

It was the twenty-fifth of December and Rowena was sitting in her bed chambers. It was almost midnight and Rowena was waiting for it to pass. They had all actually had a Christmas party. It was more fun than Rowena expected.

She was sitting in the black throne-like chair and had it facing the window. It was dark outside and snowing, though it had become light. A few Death Eaters were still awake and some were in the backyard, Rowena could see them. Bella and Rabastan were in the small cemetery that had been built. It took a while but everyone eventually learned they were now together. It had surprised Rowena. She didn't expect it to happen. When they held hands, Rowena thought it was more of a comfort thing.

Walden was still protecting her and now he never left her side unless she was in her bed chambers. He now slept in the same room and ate in the same room. The only time Rowena wouldn't have him around was when she wanted to have a shower or go toilet but he was insistent on checking the room over first. She had thanked him for saving her, she was extremely grateful.

She did remember that night, though it took a while for all her memories too return. Greyback had mentioned her mother. She had still not asked him what he meant by it. She didn't want to know. She knew that whatever it was, it wasn't going to be good. Rowena half expected to hear that Walden had murdered Greyback but he hadn't. Greyback was taken to cell, and beaten quite well, and not just once.

His pack had been banished from the house and told to find a new alpha male; they weren't going to get Greyback back. A small moan and sigh echoed the room. Rowena turned her head and looked to her bed. It was only Teddy. He must be dreaming about something. Rowena looked him over. He was now seven years old and he had grown up quite well.

Rowena had started to think of Teddy as her own. He was a beautiful and well-behaved child. She knew she would never have children. She didn't care for them all that much but Teddy eventually had an impact on her. He still asked about his parents and Rowena would tell him. He knew his parents were alive but he never asked why he couldn't be with them. Rowena was happy he just accepted where he was for now.

Rowena thought he looked a lot like Remus, except he still kept changing his hair colour. Rowena had done a little research and she learnt that Teddy was a Metamorphmagus. It surprised her. Now she knew that Tonks was one. The only thing about it that worried her was if Teddy completely changed his appearance. She might not recognise him. Though she did talk to him about it and also told him not to trust anyone else here, besides Walden. He had agreed with her. She felt Teddy trusted her.

In the last four years, they only had one meeting with the Order though nothing much had happened and most people escaped, only with a few injuries. Rowena turned her head back and looked out the window again. She shivered in her chair. She hated thinking about injuries; it made her think of her own. The injury on her back was the worst thing she had come across.

Greyback had managed to scratch her across her back with his long, yellow nails. When her memories came back she remembered it happening but she also remembered there was no pain and that she had ignored it. She could remember her reaction after Greyback was pushed from her but it was a slight blur. Things seemed out of order and erratic.

It upset her when she thought about it for too long. With one hand she rubbed the side of her head. It had taken months for her to get back and feel normal. Currently, Greyback was in a cell by himself. Rowena had only been down once to see him but she didn't speak to him. She just wanted to see him a cell for herself, to know it was safe for her now.

The door to her bed chambers slowly opened and closed again. She knew it was Walden. He approached her chair and stopped in front of her and knelt down slowly. Rowena looked at him briefly before looking out the window. Walden kept his eyes on Rowena.

'My Lord,' he said slowly. 'Is there anything else to be done tonight?'

Rowena shook her head slowly. Her eyes followed Alecto Carrow who moved about the yard. Walden nodded his understanding but he did not move.

'Was there something else?' she asked, unmoving.

'Are you feeling alright? Do you need anything?' Walden asked quickly.

'I am fine,' she said thickly. 'You can go.'

'My Lord?'

Rowena felt something touch her. Her eyes moved. Walden's hand was touching her leg ever so slightly. She looked into his blue eyes. They were bright and hopeful. Rowena moved and Walden's hand fell away. He nodded his head gently and left the room.

This was why Rowena liked being her chambers now. It was the one place that Walden didn't have to be around all the time. In the beginning, it did annoy her, then she came to depend on him and now, she wanted nothing more than to be left alone by him. He was beginning to make her nervous. She was grateful for being saved by him and she also knew his feelings and what he wanted.

Rowena shook her head to herself. It was never going to happen. She didn't want any part of that. It was something she thought would never happen to her. She never thought any man would be interested, because of whom she was but now she had found someone and it made her realise she didn't want it. She knew Walden used the female prisoners too. She didn't want to just be someone else.

Rowena mentally kicked herself. What the hell was she saying? Why was she even thinking like that? Since when did she care about Walden and her own feelings on the subject? She didn't want this at all. Her feelings and thoughts on it didn't matter. She needed to move on.

When the backyard was empty, Rowena changed and got into bed, she was careful not to wake Teddy. She decided it wouldn't hurt to share the bed because of its size. There was plenty of room for both of them. She lay on her side and looked to the window again. It took a while for sleep to take her.

A few hours later, Rowena woke up. It had become windy outside and the snow had stopped. She got out of bed carefully and checked the room with her wand. It was still dark but it was only nearly four in the morning. Rowena wasn't sure if the wind had woken her or if it was something else, though something had been bothering her.

She changed into her black robes and placed her wand in the inside pocket. She left the room quietly and made her way downstairs. The whole manor was quiet. Rowena could hear the silence pounding in her ears. She walked down to the cells and found the one with Greyback inside. She made sure he was secure before making her way in.

Greyback was awake and his head snapped up once he knew it was Rowena. Her scent caught him. He leered at her but Rowena made no reaction. She folded her arms across her chest. She wondered if he would speak first and of course, he did. There was no containing what he had to say.

'How's your injury?' he asked in a low voice.

Rowena's face tensed but she didn't answer, so Greyback continued. 'So, everyone is still following you? I thought they'd see that you're not so great. You're nothing like your father, shame too, he wasn't a bad leader. I thought you'd be more like him and-'

'Silence, beast,' Rowena said loudly.

To her surprise, Greyback obeyed though he growled low in his throat. 'There's something I need to know and it's been bothering me.'

'Your mother?' asked Greyback.

She was surprised he knew what she wanted. 'Yes,' she said quietly.

Greyback's face contorted into a huge grin. All the lines on his face bunched together and his pointed, yellow teeth glared at her while his grey eyes looked her over and took every inch of her in. Rowena checked the chains holding him. They seemed to be doing their job.

'I remember your mother,' he started quietly. He spoke of it as though he was seeing it again. 'Isabelle, her name was. She was tall and thin with long, straight red hair and the most beautiful grey eyes I've ever seen and a scent I shall never forget...'

Rowena wanted to be sick. She now knew why she didn't like werewolves; they were all beasts at heart. All willing to rip you apart at any time. They should all be rounded up and shot. They're like a disease that no one seems willing to get rid of.

'Her skin was so pale,' continued Greyback. 'Not much different to yours. Your father allowed me a taste of her, not a bite, just a taste. Your scent is very similar to hers. She wasn't the only sex slave here, that's what all the girls were referred to as, sex slaves. That's the only reason they were there, and most of them were just plain Muggles, the odd person was a Muggle-born but sometimes it cannot be helped. They're not much better anyway.'

Greyback paused for a moment. Rowena waited patiently. 'Your father once mentioned out loud about having a child or children. No one thought he was serious. He would have been a complete fool to even think of it. There was always the chance that the child could be more powerful than he, though he never considered it. He thought no one was or ever could be as powerful as him.

'He got a couple girls pregnant before your mother but one had a miscarriage and one was still born. It angered your father greatly. He then looked the rest of the sex slaves over and he picked out Isabelle. I know he brutally raped her, we all saw it, even your bodyguard.'

Rowena's face tensed more but she said nothing as Greyback continued. 'Your mother cried during the whole thing but she was stronger than any other of the slaves we had seen before. She managed to stay conscious through the whole thing; no one else had managed too. Afterwards, she was sent to the medical bay and treated for any injuries. She was found to be pregnant weeks later.

'He kidnapped someone from St. Mungo's, well, a Death Eater did anyway and they were brought to the Malfoy Manor to check Isabelle

over and see how she was with the pregnancy. The healer said that Isabelle was strong and there should be absolutely nothing wrong with the baby. He was given a good chance that the baby would live and be healthy.

‘Your father was content with that and at six months pregnant, he let your mother go. Where she went, we didn’t know. The Dark Lord was certain that if his child survived then he would find a way to him. It was no secret he had wanted a boy but when he learnt he had a girl, his plans had not changed. He thought it was for the better. Girls were normally able to get emotionally attached to people.

‘Though, your father hadn’t planned on you attending Durmstrang. He expected you to go to Hogwarts. That kinda ruined his plans, but he decided to put them off and wait until you came of age and had finished school. It would be easier. And once he learned Dumbledore had raised his child, he was happier than ever. It couldn’t have been more perfect than that.

‘He knew he could use the bond between you and Dumbledore if he managed to get you to join with him. He used you for his own personal advantage and gain. No one saw it coming. No one thought about this path. It was perfect. And the best thing was he managed to pull it off. You fed him information without knowing what he was doing.’

Greyback stopped talking. Rowena’s arms had become stiff but she didn’t move them. She took a moment to think before she spoke. ‘And if father had lived, what would have become of me?’

Greyback sniggered. ‘Well ... you wouldn’t be here,’ he said, smirking. ‘The Dark Lord planned to murder you after Dumbledore and Harry had been defeated though I don’t think he planned on you being so ... so ... like your mother. She was weak. She thought she had escaped but she hadn’t. He let her go. He let her live, so you could be born.’

The cell went silent. Greyback was breathing heavily and Rowena held her tears back. She nodded slowly and left the cell, locking it her the way out. She walked upstairs and she made her way out to the



backyard. The early morning was cold and bitter. She looked up at the sky. There was patchy cloud, though through some parts Rowena could see the stars.

She shivered as she stood there. A single tear ran down her cheek and she ignored it. Everything she once believed was now gone. Was there a reason to keep doing this? After everything Albus did for her ... turned out to be a complete waste. She threw his love and support and trust back in his face and turned on everything she once thought to be true.

She breathed in deeply and exhaled slowly. Things were becoming increasingly difficult and Rowena wasn't sure if they needed to be. She no longer felt as though she had a right place here. She no longer felt like the Dark Lord's child. She no longer wanted or needed this. Her father had never cared about her. Should she keep the fighting with the Order continue or should she give in to them now and surrender?

The door to the backyard opened slowly and it creaked quietly. Rowena held her breath. 'My Lord?'

It was only Walden. She shook her head. 'What are we doing?' she asked, exhaling slowly.

'What do you mean, my Lord?' he asked moving closer.

Rowena didn't answer him. She felt unable to. Nothing made sense to her anymore. She needed something to happen. Something to make her see what must be done. There must be something to help her but right now, Rowena didn't think anything could happen right now. It was over.

Walden grabbed her upper arms gently and turned her on the spot where she stood. Rowena looked up at him and he stared back, their eyes not breaking contact. Walden wiped her cheek with one finger gently and he gave her a faint smile.

'My Lord,' he said quietly. 'I know you have the ability to lead us and I know others share the same belief. I know things have been hard

lately and since the incident you've been cold and more distant than usual but no one blames you. What happened wasn't your fault.'

Another tear slid down her cheek and again Walden wiped it away. His words were soft and nice but they did not help her. She cast her gaze downwards and sighed to herself. Suddenly, Walden moved a little closer and he leaned in.

Rowena noticed and she held her breath as she waited. Walden's lips connected to Rowena's lightly and he waited for her to push him away or scream, shout or curse him but it never came. He took his opportunity and he leaned in more and kissed her firmer.

Their bodies touched lightly and Walden placed one arm around Rowena's waist and he brought the other arm up and rested his hand on the back of Rowena's head. When he felt no resistance, he deepened the kiss and he received a small moan in return. He smiled faintly and continued the kiss. He saw another opportunity and slipped his tongue inside.

Rowena felt unlike herself. She felt stiff, unable to control herself and have a normal reaction. She allowed him to move closer and deepen the kiss. Maybe this was what she needed. She placed her arms around his neck and allowed him to do whatever he pleased.

When the kiss ended Rowena looked up into Walden's face. He was smiling and his blue eyes went back to their usual brightness. Walden recovered from the kiss quickly but Rowena hadn't. Her mouth remained open and she panted slightly, stunned at what just occurred, she was even more shocked to learn she liked it.

She brought herself back and turned her back to Walden and took a few steps away from him. Despite how it made her feel, this could not happen. She needed to keep a clear head for the future, though despite her feelings, she didn't want to lose the opportunity for something to happen. The Order was going down and Rowena wanted to be there when it happened.

Rowena returned to her bedroom and lay down. She went to sleep but it didn't last long again as she woke up a few hours later. There

was screaming and shouting somewhere in the manor. Rowena looked over at Teddy, he was still asleep. Rowena felt slightly envious. How did he sleep with all the noise?

She got up from her bed and made her way towards the noise. It was coming from the morgue on the second floor. Rowena frowned but it quickly disappeared. She opened the door and looked at the scene before her. Dolohov and Rookwood were in there, arguing about something. Walden, Bella and Rabastan were also in there.

When they heard the door open, it turned quiet and they all looked towards it. Once they saw it was Rowena, most looked away. She stepped into the room and looked them all over.

‘What is all this about?’ she asked quietly.

No one answered her. One of her eyebrows rose in surprise. ‘Oh, so no one wants to tell me?’ she asked.

Again, no one answered her. Rowena sighed in annoyance. ‘Just tell me what happened?’

Dolohov and Rookwood both moved from where they were standing and on a cold slab lay Alicia Spinnet. That wasn’t what Rowena expected to happen. She walked over and looked down at Alicia. Her body was covered in scars and scratches and her skin had already turned grey. Her long brown hair was scrunched and covered in blood. Her eyes were closed and her lips blue. Her body lay flat and straight.

‘What happened?’ she asked again, this time her voice barely able to make any sound.

‘She was killed,’ said Rabastan quietly. ‘She got in the way of a duel and....’

He broke off but Rowena understood. ‘Who was duelling and where?’

‘Antonin and I were,’ said Rookwood lightly. ‘It happened near the kitchen. She tried to run away from us but she got in the way and one

curse caught her. She was thrown across the room and she hit the wall, head first. Pomfrey said she died instantly.'

'I do not want this happening again,' said Rowena firmly. She got nods from Dolohov and Rookwood. 'And I think you two might try staying away from each other.'

They nodded again but Rowena didn't see it. She was already out the room and back upstairs to her chambers. She walked straight to the bed and sat down and she buried her face into her hands. That wasn't something she wanted to see now, or ever. How could they be so foolish?

The door to her chambers opened and closed again and Rowena felt heavy weight beside her. 'It's not your fault.'

'How isn't it my fault?' she asked tightly. 'I've kept everything holed up here because I don't want to face the Order just yet. How can you stand this?'

Walden gave her a questioning look. 'What do you mean?'

'I mean how do you stand following me? I'm not my father and I never will be,' she said quickly, letting her words and feelings get away from her. 'I'm weak and yet people are still following me. I don't know why. I'm scared but I'm afraid to tell anyone. I cannot do this.'

'I believe in your abilities as do others here,' said Walden firmly. 'It was your father that built this group and everything within it. I don't think anyone could run it better than he, because he built it. He created it. It's never going to be easy to run something you don't know much about but I and others feel you are doing fine.'

She wept in her hands and her body shook slightly. She wasn't sure what to do anymore. Things seemed wrong still but she knew something still needed to be done but it seemed Walden had something else to do on his mind right now.

He touched Rowena's arm gently but it didn't stop her from crying. He shuffled closer to her and moved the hair from her shoulder and neck

and he gently leaned down and kissed her neck with small soft kisses. Rowena moved and wiped her eyes and sniffed. Walden moved his head as Rowena turned to look at him, her eyes wide and her mouth open slightly.

Walden removed his black shirt, baring his skin and chest to Rowena. She looked at him briefly and she felt her cheeks become unusually warm. His body was musclier and extremely taut and hairless, except for small hairs around the nipples. Rowena took a deep breath and looked away. She didn't want this. Walden moved closer still and their sides and legs were touching.

He kissed her cheeks before burying this head in her neck again. He turned his body towards her and placed his arms around her, trying to hold her closer. Rowena eventually got her head back and she pushed him away gently. She didn't know what she wanted anymore but if anything was going to happen then he needed to know that she has never been close to anything like this.

She stood up and walked to the window. Walden followed and stood directly behind her. He had removed his shoes and was now only wearing socks and his pants. He moved closer and put his arms around Rowena's waist and he rested his head on her shoulder.

'We cannot do this,' said Rowena quietly.

'Why?'

'Teddy's in the room and I will not have him wake up to see this.'

'Then we shall go to my room,' said Walden gently.

He took her hand and they left the room, securing it just to be safe and walked down the hallway, eventually finding Walden's room. It definitely looked as though it hadn't been used in a while but Rowena knew that this would do.

'I've never done this,' she whispered after the door was closed and secured.

'I know,' said Walden back quietly. 'I'll be gentle, I promise.'

Without much movement Walden removed Rowena's outer robe and pushed off the inside one, exposing her bra. It was black and silk, Walden thought it perfect. What else would her bra look like? He smiled to himself and continued his exploration of her body. He rubbed his hand over her stomach gently. The skin was so pale and soft under his touch.

He planted a kiss on her bare shoulder before continuing. He undid her pants gently and he let them fall to the floor. Rowena took her shoes off and stepped out of her pants. Walden pressed his chest against her back and he exhaled sharply. He had waited so long for this. He needed to take it slowly. To enjoy it while it lasted.

He released Rowena and took her hand and led to back over to the bed. She sat down and Walden removed his pants along with his socks, he then removed his briefs. Rowena looked but then turned her head quickly. Her face rapidly turned red.

'Look at me,' whispered Walden quietly. 'I want you to look.'

Rowena took a deep breath and held it. She slowly turned her head and looked at Walden. She started with his face. He gave her a small encouraging smile. Her eyes ran down his chest, taking in all she could and she eventually reached his groin. She continued down and looked at his manhood. He was ... big. Rowena could clearly see it within the hair around it. She looked away and Walden chuckled and joined her on the bed. He ran a hand down her back and Rowena jumped as it passed over her injury.

She made to move but Walden grabbed her arm. 'I don't care about the scratch. You're still beautiful to me and nothing can tarnish that.'

Rowena stopped and let him continue his touching, though her body remained tense. Walden removed Rowena's bra and threw it to the floor. He then moved her and laid her on the bed. He looked her up and down before laying beside her. He looked down at her breasts and studied them. They weren't small but they weren't overly huge

either. They were a good size and when he touched them, he learnt they fitted his hand nicely.

He bent his head and licked one side of her left breast. Rowena just watched him. He then took the nipple into his mouth and sucked on it gently. When he released it he blew on it and watched it turn hard. Rowena had made no sound but she continued to watch, she was intrigued. It had felt nice but a weird nice. Walden then did the same thing to the next nipple.

Once they were both hard, he rubbed his thumb around each in turn and smiled. Rowena looked at Walden. His pale face now had colour and his lips turned a normal red. He was different to the other Death Eaters. He was vicious in a gentle way. His black hair wasn't oily or greasy and neither was his skin and his teeth were white instead of yellow. His hands and skin was clean and he smelt great. She looked at the small, delicate moustache above his upper lip. She didn't mind facial hair but then she didn't really have anything to compare it too.

She moved her arms and ran her hand through his hair. She decided she wanted to enjoy this as well, since it would probably never happen again. At her touch, he looked at her, slightly surprised. He smiled and Rowena faintly returned it. He moved quickly and crushed their lips together in a fierce kiss. Rowena moaned into his mouth gently and Walden returned it.

When he broke the kiss he moved down Rowena's body and removed her black underwear gently. Walden could feel his heart beating firmly in his chest. This was the one woman he had lusted after for so long. The woman he fantasized about especially when he was with some other person. Rowena was untouched and pure. Something only he could have.

He tossed her undies on the floor and look at Rowena's special, pure place. The skin was pale and the dark brown hair there was short and sparse though there were many. It was perfect. He licked his lips. He moved down the bed and he gently opened her legs and got between them. He gently touched her between her two lips and Rowena's body jerked upwards but she made no sound.

Walden looked up at her. She was biting her lower lip. He went back to what he was doing. He laid his stomach flat against the bed and moved his head closer. Rowena's body jerked upwards again. She made a strange noise within her throat and Walden halted his movements.

'What are you doing?' she asked in a whisper.

'Relax,' he replied. 'You'll enjoy this.'

Rowena wasn't so sure but she listened and tried to relax her body and she watched him again. He moved his head closer to her again and he buried his face in her mound and breathed in deeply. He felt his manhood jump to attention. He rubbed inside her body with a single finger and it didn't take long for her to become a little wet. He moved his hand away and with his tongue he licked the whole inside of Rowena.

Her juices flowed into his mouth easily. He knew she just came, though she still made no sound. Walden was determined to change that. He continued to lap her up and once finished he moved and laid his body across Rowena's, covering her. He wiped his mouth with the back of his hand before kissing Rowena again, this time softly.

She placed her arms around him and kept him in place. She wanted this kiss to last much longer than the others. Walden seemed to get the message and he kept the kiss going, not ending it until Rowena pushed him away gently by his shoulder. He reached down and gently pushed her legs further open.

'Are you ready?'

Rowena nodded but said nothing. She didn't trust herself to say anything. Every time she looked down at Walden's chest she wanted to drool. A part of her wished she had seen his chest earlier; she might have given in to him before.

She kept her arms around him and she braced herself as Walden push his body against hers. He lined is cock up to her entrance and slowly he pushed into her body. He didn't get very far before Rowena



squirmed and made a small noise in her throat and attempt to push Walden off her. Walden looked down at her and searched her eyes.

‘Are you alright?’ he asked worriedly.

‘It hurts,’ she said hoarsely. ‘I don’t know ... I don’t know if I can do this.’

‘I promised I would be gentle and I meant it,’ he whispered. ‘Once I’m past your barrier it will feel better.’

Rowena nodded and Walden started again. He entered her body and he pushed in as it became tighter. Rowena grabbed Walden’s arms as the pain started to become unbearable. She gasped and she shut her eyes together tightly, squeezing out two tears. It took a few moments, but Rowena’s felt her hymen break. She screamed out and she felt a gushing of liquid run out of her body.

Walden continued to thrust in and out of her body, his pace increasing every few minutes. Rowena wondered how long he could keep this pace going. At the moment, Rowena didn’t feel anything exciting. All she could feel was a numb thrusting within her body. It felt rough and harsh but she said nothing. Maybe after the first time, she would feel better about this act.

Walden buried his head in her neck again and his breathing was becoming heavier and more frantic. Rowena rubbed his back. There was a thin layer of sweat along his skin. She ran her fingertips along with spine and the sides of his back. Walden shivered but she knew it was from pleasure as he moaned. He slowly down to a very slow pace and looked at Rowena.

‘Not feeling anything?’

Rowena shook her head feebly. Walden just smiled though. ‘I’ll try something else.’

He started to faster again but he changed the angle in which he entered her body, but after a few minutes he noticed it wasn't working. Walden’s eyes sparkled and he flipped them over, so Rowena was on

top. She hadn't expected it and she placed her hands on Walden's chest to steady herself.

Walden put his hands on Rowena's hips and he moved her around before going up and down. Rowena could feel the entire length of his shaft being sheathed inside her body. This time, on the first thrust, Rowena actually felt something and it showed on her face. Walden's face turned into a huge grin.

It didn't take long for both of them to lose control and Rowena held onto Walden as she felt her body explode with an unimaginable pleasure and Walden grunted heavily as he released himself inside her. When they both finished Rowena collapsed on top of Walden and his arms went around her and he held her close.

He remained inside her and stroked her hair gently. His big smile was still on his face. He had finally gotten what he wanted. Rowena stayed on him. She was comfortable and didn't want to move just yet. She had trouble believing she had just done that. It sounded so unlike her, she knew that.

Rowena gradually closed her eyes and steadied her breath. With her ear pressed against Walden's chest, she could hear his heart beat. It relaxed her and sent her off to sleep quicker than normal.

## Chapter Twenty-Nine – Unravelling

As Rowena got dressed the next morning back in her room she thought about last night. It was unlike anything she had done before. She had to be honest, she did enjoy it but it really shouldn't happen again. It didn't take long for Walden to join her back in this room. He looked her over but said nothing. Rowena avoided looking at him. She couldn't do this just yet.

Walden got up and dressed quickly. He approached Rowena, who quickly turned to face him; she didn't want him touching her right now. It was too soon. 'Where's Teddy?' asked Walden after a few moments of more silence.

'He's with Madam Pomfrey,' replied Rowena. 'He's fine.'

'What happens now?'

'Gather the Death Eaters and tell them to be in the living room within an hour from now,' she said quickly. 'It's time for a meeting.'

Walden chuckled softly. 'That's not what I meant.'

'I know. Do you as you're told,' said Rowena, turning away from him.

Yes, my Lord,' said Walden, bowing.

He left the room and when the hour was up Rowena made her way downstairs and into the living room. All Death Eaters were there, waiting. They were all seated around the table, patiently waiting for Rowena to join them. She sat at the head of the table and looked at everyone before starting.

'I had an idea this morning,' she said softly but clearly. 'I want to set a trap for the Order, but not for just any members. I want to capture a few of the elder members, for example, Moody, Kingsley, Remus, Arthur and I know it will not be easy, especially capturing Moody but I'm sure if we plan this right, it can happen.'

'What did you have in mind, my Lord?' asked Thorfinn Rowle.

Rowena looked to him. He was one Death Eater that she had never really spoken to. His long blonde hair was tied behind his head and his light eyes focused on Rowena. She smiled faintly.

‘I’m thinking to set up a mock raid,’ she said in the same tone as before. ‘We could raid a place and set up a few traps around and wait for the Order to come and help the poor people who live there.’

‘My Lord, may I ask why you want to capture some senior members of the Order?’ asked Evan Rosier.

‘Because they know the most about the Order,’ she replied. ‘And I’m sure Moody especially knows Albus quite well. I’m sure he could be of some use. Maybe Arthur would like to see his two eldest children and daughter-in-law again, and maybe Remus wouldn’t mind seeing his son.’

A few Death Eaters laughed and jeered. Rowena noticed a big difference within herself and all Death Eaters currently here. She felt more in control, more powerful than before, as though she knew exactly what she was doing and why without having to question herself. She liked it. She should have been like this before. It would have been better and maybe the war would have been finished by now.

‘When were you thinking of carrying out this plan?’ asked Mulicber.

‘A few months,’ replied Rowena. ‘This needs to be planned carefully.’

‘Is Greyback joining us?’ asked Selwyn.

‘No,’ said Rowena firmly. ‘Maybe the next one but not this time, I think we’ll give him a little longer to think about things.’

The room went quiet and Rowena looked around again. She noticed Lucius and Narcissa weren’t playing any attention to the meeting. She stood up from her chair and approached them; they weren’t even sitting with everyone else at the table. Why hadn’t she noticed before?

They both stopped their whispering and looked up at Rowena as she looked down at them. 'Like to tell me what's going on?'

'We're sorry, my Lord,' said Lucius getting onto his knees.

'Sit back down,' she hissed quietly. 'What's going on?'

'I'm pregnant,' said Narcissa silently.

Rowena's eyes widened for a moment. That was definitely the last thing she expected to hear. A few Death Eaters gasped and Rowena stared at them. 'Since when?' she asked. 'I didn't know you two wanted any more children.'

'Well,' said Lucius slowly, smoothing back his hair. 'Usually when a Malfoy family has a male child, that's normally it because you have an heir, so there's no need for more children but this wasn't planned. Narcissa only found out a few days ago and I wanted her to get rid of it but she wants to keep it.'

'And I hope you plan on letting her keep it,' said Rowena coldly.

'Of course, my Lord,' said Lucius quickly, almost falling over his words in his haste.

'Good,' said Rowena quietly. She looked at Narcissa. 'Congratulations.'

'Thank you,' she whispered happily.

There was a loud scraping in the room and it came from the other side of the table. Everyone looked over, including Rowena, and saw Draco stormed from the room. Walden stood up but Rowena shook her head. 'Leave him.'

She walked back to her seat and the discussion of plans continued.

Tonks paced in the living room of her apartment. Her son was still missing. It had been four years. She wondered if he was still alive.

She felt angry but she wasn't sure who it should be directed at. A part of her thought it should be Remus, but it wasn't his fault that Rowena had their son but there was no way of knowing if Rowena has kept him alive or not.

Speaking of Remus, he was never around anymore. He spent all his time with the Order, or somewhere else. His mind had definitely been somewhere else. Their marriage was quickly falling apart. She originally thought it was another woman, but she knew what Remus was like. He had trouble just thinking about a relationship. He struggled to come to terms about them being together.

Tonks looked at the ring on her hand. She remembered when they first got married. She couldn't imagine anything breaking them apart. She was finding it hard to believe how wrong she was. Remus was a good man but he had some self destructive tendencies. Tonks only hoped he wasn't spending any more time with the other werewolves, it never helped.

She stopped pacing and sighed heavily. She sat down on the small couch and looked up at the clock. It was almost two in the morning and Remus still wasn't home. She was waiting for him. She had tried to get pregnant again but Remus wouldn't hear of it. He said they had been lucky the first time and it would be bad to push it any further.

She once tried to get pregnant without him knowing but he found out and he stayed angry with her for a while. Since then they didn't have sex as often as they normally did. When they started together Remus couldn't get enough of her. Tonks knew he had been celibate for a while and the last he had sex was at school, which he said got out of hand, though he never went into any detail.

Tonks stood up from the couch and walked to the mirror in the room. It once belonged to her mother. She gave it to her after she married Remus. Tonks loved it. It was silver and black metal ropes entwined all around the sides. Though it was old, Tonks still loved it.

She looked at her bright, bubble-pink hair. Maybe it was becoming a little too bright for these days. She wrinkled her nose and concentrated. Her hair turned a vivid blue. She quite liked it. She tried

again and changed it orange and made it shoulder-length. Her nose wrinkled again for another reason. She didn't like that too much. It didn't suit her face.

Her hair then changed to a dark purple. She quite liked that. Tonks turned her head as she heard a small noise outside the front door. She looked in the mirror again quickly and made a fast decision, changing her hair back to the vivid blue and made it short, but not spiky. She nodded her head once. That would do nicely for now.

The door locked opened with a click and closed again slowly. She heard Remus sigh as he walked into the living room. Tonks turned and looked at him. His robe was wet and she walked over to him and helped him remove it. He muttered his thanks and went into the kitchen. Tonks followed him. She remained in the door way as she watched him make tea. She knew how fond he was of tea.

She kept her hands by her side. She was waiting for Remus to tell her what he found out but he still remained silent. She sighed silently and decided to ask. 'What did you find out?'

'Not much,' he said shortly.

'Remus...' she whispered.

He turned to face Tonks. Her new hair colour didn't seem to faze him though she had never had it blue before. He looked tired and worn out. 'Look,' he said firmly. 'I spoke to other werewolves as subtly as possible, none of them know anything.'

Tonks nodded, her eyes slowly filling with tears. Remus immediately felt guilty about his tone with her. He put the kettle on hold and he approached his wife. He wrapped his arms around her and held her close. Tonks rested her head on his shoulder.

'Though I do know one thing,' he said quietly. He had only just remembered. 'I don't think Rowena is having the best time with Greyback. His pack was there with some of the others. They said they had been banished from where they were hiding with Rowena.'

‘Why?’ muffled Tonks.

‘I don’t know,’ said Remus, absently stroking Tonks’ new hair. ‘But some hinted that Greyback had done something wrong. Greyback himself wasn’t around though.’

‘What do you think?’

‘I don’t know,’ Remus repeated, shrugging. ‘But I would assume something happened and I don’t think Rowena would want Greyback out of her sight. It wouldn’t be a good idea.’

It went quiet between them. Remus continued to stroke Tonks’ hair while Tonks held onto his arms tightly. There was a question weighing heavily on both of their minds but it seemed that neither of them wanted to voice it.

‘Do you think Teddy’s still alive?’ whispered Tonks.

Remus exhaled slowly. ‘I’m sure he is,’ he replied. ‘I’m sure we would have heard something by now.’

Remus released Tonks and he walked back to the kettle and continued making his tea. ‘But Remus...’

‘What?’ he asked impatiently.

‘You know how Rowena feels about you and....’

‘That does not matter,’ he said firmly, keeping his back to Tonks. ‘I do not believe that Rowena will take out her hatred for me on our son. He isn’t a werewolf.’

‘He’s still half-werewolf, just without the transformation,’ said Tonks quietly.

‘I know,’ breathed Remus.



It went quiet between them again. Tonks slowly folded her arms across her chest. Something had changed again in Remus' demeanour. It didn't pass her unnoticed. He finished making tea and he took the pot and two cups over to the table and sat down. Tonks stared but gradually unfolded her arms and joined him, sitting opposite.

Remus each poured them a cup and he passed one over to Tonks. She nodded her thanks but said nothing. Remus took a sip of his tea and Tonks followed. She took a sip of her own. It tasted nice. As she added one sugar Remus watched. She clinked the sides of the cup with her spoon rather loudly.

He continued to watch her. She placed the spoon on the table roughly and Remus raised an eyebrow. 'Is everything alright?' he asked quietly.

Tonks took another sip of her tea and placed it back down. She looked up at Remus. Her face had turned hard like stone. 'Don't you want our son back?' she asked her voice unrecognisable and hard.

Remus looked at her in slight astonishment. 'Of course, I care about our son, he's mine too. I just believe that Rowena will not harm him. She has no reason to.'

'But she hates you,' said Tonks loudly. 'Isn't that reason enough?'

'No, I don't think so,' said Remus, his voice rising a little.

'But you can't be sure...'

'No,' he said loudly, silencing Tonks. 'I'm not sure but I don't want to think that she be so cold as to harm an innocent child just because one of the parents is a werewolf. He's your son too and I'm sure she has taken that into consideration.'

'But you know nothing about her!'

'I know,' he said even louder. 'But no one seems to know much about her. We all thought Albus knew her but it turned out he didn't. He may

have raised her but it proved nothing. I would like to think she has a lot of her father in her but from what Albus has said, her mother wasn't a bad person and I'm hoping with Teddy that that side of her comes out.'

Remus stood up from the table so quickly that his chair fell to the ground on its side. Tonks jumped slightly. She didn't mean to anger him. Remus stormed from the room.

'Wait!' Tonks yelled.

Remus sighed in anger but he stopped. Tonks knew it was now or never to ask since she now had the nerve too. 'Is there another woman?'

Remus turned to face Tonks. 'Where the hell is this coming from?' he asked, outraged.

'You've been distant,' she said quietly, her voice almost breaking and her eyes threatening tears. 'I've tried with you but ever since Teddy was taken you've been somewhere else. You always leave without telling me where you're going and you never tell me where you were when you get back. I have also noticed some small looks between you and Hermione.'

Remus looked away. He felt guilty and unable to look at his wife. Tonks continued. 'If you're no longer interested, even if there isn't someone else, you should tell me. I have a right to know how you're feeling.' She paused. 'Have you done something?'

Remus nodded his head slowly. He now felt worse even though the one thing wasn't that bad, it was the fact that he wanted to do more with her and couldn't.

'What is it?' she asked inaudibly, her voice shaking.

'Hermione and I kissed,' he said quietly. 'It only happened once and it was after she broke up with Ron but it was before Teddy was taken. I know it was wrong and nothing else has happened since but-'

‘You have thought about it though?’

‘Yes,’ he admitted. ‘And I know the looks are continuing but I still love you and I want Teddy back and for us to be complete again.’

‘I knew something was between you and Hermione,’ she said quietly. ‘All the little looks, all your sneaking about-’

‘My leaving here a lot has nothing to do with Hermione,’ he said defensively.

‘Then what is it?’

‘Nothing,’ he replied. ‘I’ve just been needing a lot of time alone. I know this has been hard on you too but we all handle things differently.’

‘Do you have feelings for Hermione?’

‘Dora...’

‘Just answer the question,’ she said, closing her eyes tightly.

‘Yes,’ said Remus eventually.

‘Then why not leave me and go after her? She’s now single,’ said Tonks quickly.

‘Because I still love you,’ said Remus firmly. ‘Besides, even if I did, she’s too young.’

The room went silent once again. Tonks had no interest in talking to Remus further. She brushed past him and left the kitchen and stormed from the apartment. Remus remained in the kitchen. He felt deflated. It didn’t go as planned.

He was honest. He did still love Tonks and he had no intention of losing her. He sat back down at the kitchen table. This was Tonks’ apartment and he was grateful he was able to move in. He knew they

were married but he was still grateful. All the stuff here belonged to Tonks too. He did have some clothes and books, but that was about it.

Remus sunk in his chair as too many thoughts flooded his mind. He couldn't deny his feelings but he also felt incredibly guilty. He still loved Tonks, of course he did, but he also had feelings for Hermione. He did think about her but never when with Tonks, although it has been a while since they were intimate together.

Remus sighed. He wondered if things could get any more messed up than this.

At the Ministry of Magic, Scrimgeour was not a happy man. His desk was cluttered with things he could do without. There were reports after reports after report of accidents, murders and odd things everywhere. He didn't know what to do next.

Everything seemed to be getting out of control. He didn't like it. They had Aurors but there weren't enough of them for them to be everywhere at once. He started to wonder if all the problems were coming from the Dark Lord's daughter or her followers or if some people were taking their fear and panic to an unnecessary level.

He knew there had been some break ins and a few bashings, which he was sure had nothing to do with Rowena or the Death Eaters, they normally raided places, and killed everyone and anyone for no reason at all. Most other things though he was sure were coming from the Death Eaters. He was also sure that the Death Eaters were acting on Rowena's orders though, but it still didn't make them any better for actually committing the acts.

He sighed irritably and started signing papers. Every now and then his secretary would come into the room and place more reports on his desk. It made him sigh more often and louder. He continued to sigh. He had heard from Dumbledore a few days ago, saying they were getting on top of things.

Scrimgeour, along with many other people, thought Dumbledore would have finished this off ages ago, even with the help of his group.

When he first found out about the Order, he was surprised but in hindsight, it was a good thing they were around.

He sighed again and got on with his work. He could see and talk to Dumbledore later. There would be time. For a while, Rowena had been quiet. He and many others, including the Order were sure that something had happened to stop them from all their previous destruction.

Once more he sighed. He had much work to do and it felt like he was running out of time to get through it.

Harry walked around his room at Grimmauld Place. He thought after Voldemort died everything would end and the wizarding world would go back to normal, it was the one thing he looked forward too. He wanted to find a woman he could grow old with, get married, have children, a proper family and most thing, he wanted to live and make a home in Godric's Hollow.

But now it seemed less and less likely that it was going to happen any time soon. He didn't know much about Rowena at all but he knew what her father was like. He wasn't sure if Rowena knew what she was doing either or if she was going along for the ride. Harry wouldn't be surprised if there was one or a few Death Eaters helping her out on the side.

He stopped his pacing and looked around the room. His bed remained unmade and some of his clothes piled on the floor. He was no longer sure which were clean and which weren't, though he didn't think it mattered right now. He looked at the wall, to the frame on the wall, which was at present, empty. It made him think of Hogwarts.

He still found it hard to believe that Rowena had the nerve to break into Hogwarts. What was she trying to prove? That she could? She used Aberforth and Albus. It angered Harry. Albus raised her like his own child and this is what she was giving back to him and he knew that Aberforth was one of the only people she would trust when she couldn't handle things with Albus.

Harry thought about going to the Burrow and seeing how the Weasley's were doing but since breaking up with Ginny, things felt different. He longer felt close to many of them, Ron especially, though he wondered if that had anything to do with Hermione. He tried to convince Ron that he and Hermione were only friends but it didn't work. Not this time.

He had never actually thought about Hermione in that way before. She had always felt like a sister to him but after breaking up with Ginny, she was always there. And she was always around when he was off on one of his crazy adventures. He chuckled lightly to himself. She sometimes questioned him but she still stuck by him, no matter what.

For the first time, he actually saw Hermione as a woman and not just his friend. She had grown up nicely and filled out in the right places. Harry felt a little guilty just thinking about it but it was hard to think about something else, when everything else just depressed him.

Harry didn't doubt any of Dumbledore's abilities but Harry now knew that love did have its disadvantages. He was blinded by his love for Rowena. He kept thinking he was doing the right thing with the situation but it was never the case.

Harry sighed in anger and kicked the back leg of the bed. He hated not knowing what was going on. They had people missing and Harry didn't think Rowena was going to stop there. She had already taken Teddy, Bill, Charlie, Fleur, Alicia, Hannah and Madam Pomfrey. Not to mentioned killing Blaise. He kept wondering if any of them were still alive.

He wanted to talk to Molly and see how she was coping with her two eldest sons and daughter-in-law missing but he kept stopping himself. He never seemed to ask Remus or Tonks how they were with Teddy not being around but he never seemed to get to that either. Someone else always ended up asking them about how they were feeling instead.

There was small knock at the door. He looked at it but said nothing. After the third knock the door opened and Sirius poked his head

inside. Harry placed his head in his hands. Sirius walked over and sat down beside Harry on the bed. His grey eyes looked his godson over.

‘How are you holding up?’

There was a long silence before Harry replied. ‘It’s been four years,’ he said inaudibly. ‘It should be over by now.’

‘I know,’ said Sirius. ‘Albus thought Rowena had stopped but it only lasted a few years.’

‘She won’t stop until someone stops her,’ said Harry, raising his head.

Sirius nodded. ‘I’m sure,’ he said in agreement. ‘How is everything else?’

‘What everything else?’

‘You’re no longer talking to Ginny, you hardly speak with Ron anymore and Hermione seems to be the only person you’re civil too. Is there something there with Hermione?’ asked Sirius, frowning faintly. He was aware of Remus and Hermione’s feelings. Not many people knew but Sirius lived here. He wasn’t a fool.

‘I don’t know,’ he replied quietly. ‘Things are confused and all over the place right now. I’m not entirely sure what’s what or how I’m feeling about things.’

‘I’m sure it will be better when things are settled down,’ said Sirius quietly. He kept his eyes on Harry. Sirius knew this third war was hard on everyone, but it was Harry that had the weight of Voldemort on him. Sirius knew that others had trouble with Voldemort and that others lost people but Voldemort was always only after Harry. All the others were just unfortunate.

‘How’s everything else?’ asked Harry after another long period of silence.

Sirius shrugged and his hands closed together on his lap. ‘Most are fine,’ he replied. ‘Though I think Remus and Tonks are fighting again.’

I can't imagine how it would feel to lose a son. The rest of the Weasley's are having trouble still.'

'How many are alive, do you think?' asked Harry, his voice breaking.

'I want to think they all are,' replied Sirius with a faint smile. 'I don't think it does anyone good if we all start thinking the worst.'

Harry nodded. He averted his eyes to the floor again. The room had turned darker. Harry was tired but he wasn't thinking about sleep. He couldn't remember the last time he had a good night's sleep and he was sure not many other people were sleeping well either.

Sirius stood up and patted Harry on the back. He felt bad for his godson. 'You should get some sleep. You can never tell what tomorrow will bring and hopefully it will be good.'

Harry grunted in reply but said nothing. Sirius left the room, closing the door behind him. Harry looked up at it. He still loved Sirius like a father, but he wasn't really in the mood to speak to anyone. He wanted to be alone. It was becoming a rare thing though he knew many people were in and out of this house all the time.

Harry kicked off his shoes and lay down on the bed. He looked up at the ceiling and his thoughts drifted to Severus. Harry still couldn't believe they were on the same side. Harry was sure that not many people could believe it.

Though the information didn't change anything, they were still enemies and still hated each other but Harry felt better knowing they were on the same side now. It meant he no longer had to question the man's loyalties. He had originally thought he would leave and join Rowena but it wouldn't make any sense. Rowena would know better than to trust him, especially when he betrayed her father.

Harry continued staring up at the ceiling. He was still feeling confused. He sometimes wondered if the Slytherin's he attended school with had joined with Rowena or if they had chosen a different path. Some of them he knew would join Rowena like Draco or Theodore, mainly



because their father's were there but some of the others he wasn't sure about.

Sirius had been right though, tomorrow could bring something new though Harry doubted it would happen. Right now, he could only imagine what Rowena had planned. They've already been on many raids and they've slaughtered villages and murdered hundreds of innocent people and kidnapped many people but Harry knew it could get a lot worse.

He sighed once more. He knew things could be much, much worse. He wasn't looking forward to what tomorrow could bring.

## Chapter Thirty - Plans Gone Wrong

As the planning continued, Rowena left and returned to her bed chambers. Not once all day had she checked on Teddy. She felt a little bad. He needed someone around and she wasn't there. She opened the door and walked inside. Teddy seemed fine. He was playing with some more, older, toys on the floor. Rowena made sure he grew up with everything he needed and wanted.

She still loved Teddy like he was her own. She had recently begun trying to remember what it was like to not have him around, but it was becoming hard. She watched him for a little longer. He continued playing. He didn't stop or pause when she entered the room.

Rowena knew she couldn't keep him but a part of her wanted too. He was a special little boy. She sometimes wished she could have children, well, she knew she could but she also knew she wouldn't want any of her own. It wouldn't be right for her to have any children. They would likely grow up to be like her and Rowena was sure that one of her was enough.

She left the room quietly and went back into the living room. They had gone quiet when she left. She looked around before sitting back down in her seat. The more they went over this plan, the more she wasn't sure about it. They told her that they wanted to raid a very small village on the outskirts of Bristol and set up traps around the outside but Rowena knew there was a good chance that they would suspect a trap if no one was dead or the village looked like normal.

Bella had pointed this out but Rowena wasn't sure if she wanted to slaughter another whole village just to set up a trap to capture only a few people. She knew the whole Order would be there and they'd have to single them out, but Rowena suggested sending the Order a note. One saying if they wanted to see their other members and family again that they would only bring certain people and if the others showed up then their prisoners would be killed.

The only problem was that Rowena wasn't sure if she would be able to murder them just for that reason. It seemed unnecessarily cruel but Rowena knew she had people that could do it for her. Once the

discussions were done, Rowena left the room again but she didn't go to her chambers, she went out into the backyard instead. She needed some time.

She went outside and looked up. The plan was to be carried out at the end of the week. Rowena had to admit that she was nervous. She kept getting a nagging feeling that things were going to go very wrong, but she herself could be wrong about that feeling, she knew that.

The back door opened and it was Walden that joined her. 'My Lord,' he said quietly.

Rowena said nothing but Walden knew it was Ok to continue. 'What about Greyback? You can't keep him in a cell. He's been in there for four years. You have to let him out sometime.'

'I cannot have him leaving this place and abandoning us,' said Rowena firmly. 'You know he has the loyalty of nearly all werewolves. I'm sure he could bring them down on us before we could say boo and I'm not willing to take that chance. We have to get him back on side.'

'And how do you plan to do that?' asked Walden. He almost sounded a little irritated.

Rowena was silent for a moment. 'I am not sure. We'll have to offer him something, something that he cannot refuse and before you say anything, no, it cannot be Teddy.'

Walden nodded and remained with Rowena but he went quiet. Rowena hoped Walden didn't really expect her to give him Teddy after all this time. She had looked after him, cared for him. She wasn't about to let all of that go to waste. And despite what Greyback did, she knew she needed him on her side. She knew he would never join the Order but he could also become an enemy and it was something Rowena couldn't let happen.

Later that night, as Rowena prepared for bed, the door to her chamber opened. She knew it was Walden and she couldn't help but wonder what he wanted. She turned. He was still standing near the

door, now closed. His mouth was slightly open. She knew he wanted something.

He approached her and dropped to his knees. Rowena looked down in surprise. What was he doing? He bowed his head before looking up at her again. Rowena remained silent and waited for him to say what he wanted to say.

‘My Lord,’ he said lightly. ‘I know you’re not interested in a relationship and I know you didn’t like it the first time, but I had hoped you would reconsider.’

‘You still look at the other prisoners,’ said Rowena lightly. ‘You watch the others with them. I will not come second to anyone.’

She made to move but Walden made a small, desperate sound. ‘My Lord, please. I will not disappoint you,’ he whispered. ‘I will only touch you. I will only look at you. I would give anything to touch you right now.’

His eyes burned her skin with ferocity. Rowena couldn’t help but feel empowered by this. It was something she had never even dreamed of happening. It was exciting and it seemed overwhelming at the same time. Someone was begging to be with her, to touch her. It seemed unreal. She had wondered if she were dreaming though.

‘Please,’ Walden begged.

Rowena looked to Teddy, who was sitting on the floor. He hadn’t noticed anything happening. She cleared her throat. ‘Teddy,’ she said quietly.

He looked up at her with wide blue eyes. Rowena steadied her breathing. ‘Go and see Madam Pomfrey, tell her I said you could have some sweets and make sure you go straight to her.’

Teddy smiled and nodded happily as he left the room. Rowena could hear him running down the corridor. She knew he would like the idea of candy and things. She knew Pomfrey probably wouldn’t approve but she wasn’t the one raising him right now.

Rowena then nodded her head to Walden very slightly and he noticed. He quickly moved forward on his knees and buried his head into her stomach, taking in her scent once again. He placed his hands on her back and held her firmly, his large hands doing it easily. He groaned against her skin. Rowena eventually put one hand on the back of his head, stroking his hair between her fingers.

Carefully, Walden moved Rowena's robes off her body and got them out of the way. He got to his feet and shed his own clothes. They were becoming an annoying problem right now. Both of them were naked within seconds and Rowena suddenly felt shy but she didn't try hiding this time.

He took her hand and led her straight over to the bed. She knew this was going to the same place as last time, though she hoped it wouldn't hurt again. He laid her down and he joined her quickly. Rowena lay on her back and she let Walden run his hands up and down her body. It actually felt quite nice. His eyes explored her as she lay very still.

Rowena watched him but she said nothing and she didn't touch him either. A part of her wanted to but she was unsure. She didn't want to make a fool of herself in this type of situation. Walden moved closer to her. Rowena felt something hard brush against her outer thigh. She knew Walden was ready for this to happen again.

He moved quickly and lay flat on his back, picking Rowena up with him and sitting her on top of him. Rowena was surprised by the change of position. She had expected it to be like last time. It was clear he wanted something different this time. She steadied herself by placing her hands on his chest. She looked down at him. There was a faint smile painted across his face.

Rowena couldn't help it. She smiled back a little. Walden moved one hand and placed it underneath Rowena. She jumped at the contact in her nether regions. He was stroking her and it didn't take long for Rowena to be wet and ready for this either.

He gently placed one hand on her hips and the other on his hard cock and he guided it inside Rowena. She stiffened when it was half-way in. It didn't hurt like last time but it still felt sensitive and tight, though Walden seemed to love that part of it. He hissed faintly as he slowly pushed himself inside. Rowena kept her hands on his chest.

When he was completely inside, he rocked Rowena's body slightly. She felt his shaft go out and then back in at a slow pace. It had actually felt quite nice. Last time, she didn't feel anything like that. Maybe there was a reason people liked sex after all. She felt her cheeks go warm but she ignored it. She closed her eyes as Walden continued to same action several times over.

When he stopped, Rowena opened her eyes. His smile had gotten wider. She didn't want him to push it right now. She had been cold to him before, after their first time, but she wasn't sure if she wanted this, or if the one time was enough.

He moved her into a more comfortable position on top of him and began to move a little faster. The faster he got, the more Rowena got a funny, building sensation in her abdomen. After several minutes she placed her hands on his shoulder and made him lie flat again and she laid her body on top, pressing their bodies together. They were both beginning to develop a sweat.

She ran her hands through his hair and for the first time, she kissed him, very lightly at first but she eventually pressed harder and Walden groaned into her mouth. He moved his head and deepened the kiss between them. It was then that Rowena returned the moan. Walden moved his hands and ran them through Rowena's long, dark brown hair.

Most of his downward movements had ceased but he still bucked his hips every now and then. When the kiss broke, Rowena moved her body off his and sat up on him straighter. Walden began his movements again, gradually increasing pace. When it became fast, he placed his hands on her waist and steadied her.

Rowena moaned louder and threw her head back as she cried out. She had never felt pleasure like this before. It was an unbelievable

feeling. When the feeling could no longer be held back, Rowena released herself. She cried out again as the pleasure spread throughout her body. She felt something inside explode and she held on to Walden as he helped her ride through it.

As soon as she was finished, Walden could no longer hold it either and he grunted and held onto Rowena's body tighter. He released himself too and came inside Rowena's body. Once finished, Rowena felt weak and her body started to shake a little. She collapsed on top of Walden and he placed her arms around her. She closed her eyes and steadied her breathing, though it took a while.

Walden remained inside of her. He didn't want to move and neither did she. Walden stroked her hair and she quickly fell asleep.

The next morning, when Rowena awoke she couldn't help but notice she was alone in her bed and she was still naked. She got up and showered quickly, cleaning herself thoroughly after last night. It was great, but it should not happen again. She dressed into some clean, black robes and left her bed chambers.

She walked to the medical room to see if Teddy was still there. She opened the door and went inside. She saw Teddy lying on one of the beds. He looked peaceful when sleeping. Madam Pomfrey came out of another small room, which Rowena knew the potions were kept. She almost dropped the one she was holding when she saw Rowena.

'M-my Lord,' she stuttered. 'Is something wrong?'

'No,' she replied quickly. 'Just wanted to see if Teddy was alright last night?'

Madam Pomfrey smiled kindly. 'He was fine last night. Though, he did have a small nightmare but I have him a dreamless sleeping potion. He should be awake soon.'

'Good,' said Rowena. 'Thank you.'

Madam Pomfrey nodded and Rowena left the room. She went downstairs. It was quiet. There weren't too many people around. She

walked down to the cells and looked inside the one with Greyback inside. He was still chained to the wall and he seemed secure. Rowena unlocked the door and she went in, leaving the door open, just in case.

Greyback slowly lifted his head to look at her. He sneered but said nothing. Rowena tilted her head and looked him over. 'Do you ever want to get out of this cell?' she asked quietly.

'What the hell do you think?' he asked viciously.

Rowena remained near the doorway but she didn't take her eyes off Greyback. His body had changed. He had become thinner and dirtier, though Rowena wondered for a moment if that were possible and his clothes had become barely more than tattered rags.

'If there was one thing I could give you, other than Teddy, for you to rejoin us without attacking me, what would it be?' she asked clearly.

Greyback growled low in his throat but Rowena knew he was thinking it over. He had a chance to get out of here and reclaim what was his. He shrugged slightly. 'I'm not sure,' he said gruffly.

'Think about it,' said Rowena, waiting.

He leaned forward, as much as the chain would allow, and looked at Rowena more carefully. There was something different. He learnt what it was but he said nothing. It would do him no favours, but he also didn't really care if she was fucking some Death Eater.

'I want victims,' he said eventually.

'What do you mean?'

'You know what I mean,' he growled. 'When we all go out on a raid or something I want to have some human prey. I also want my pack back here with me. I will not stand for someone else claiming them.'

'But you get prey on raids anyway,' said Rowena slowly. She wasn't sure she quite understood what he wanted.



'I know,' he replied. 'But I want prey other times too, when I choose. I want to hunt with my pack.'

Rowena nodded her head. 'I'll consider it.'

She left the cell and when she made it to the living room, she saw Teddy in there with Walden. Teddy seemed a little nervous but not scared. Rowena walked over to him and knelt down. Teddy bit his lower lips and hovered on question he wanted to ask.

'What is it?' asked Rowena gently.

'I want to play outside,' he said after a moment's hesitation.

Rowena nodded and she took Teddy's hand and led him outside, Walden followed. Once outside, Teddy let Rowena's hand go and he ran around the backyard. Walden conjured up a swing set and some other smaller toys. Rowena said nothing about it. She continued to watch Teddy. It was about time he got some sun. He was turning quite pale. Rowena didn't want anyone thinking he was sick.

Rowena sat down around the outside table and Walden joined her. It was quiet between them. Rowena didn't want to talk about what they had done last night but she knew Walden was thinking about it. She shook her head and went back to thoughts about Teddy.

The day before the mock raid, Rowena took a piece of parchment, a quill and some ink and sat down at the desk she placed in her room. She was about to write a letter to Albus. She wanted to be in control of this one. She knew it would not be easy but something had to be done.

She dipped the quill into the black ink and began to write:

Dear Albus,

I do hope you are well. I am sorry for any harm I have brought you but you left me with no choice. I took my father's place gladly and would do so again. I am writing to tell you something. If you wish to

see some of your Order members, friends, or family again, you will do as I say. We will be taking them to a small village, see the address I have placed for you, and I want only a few of you to come and retrieve them. A trade, if you will. I want to see Moody, Arthur, Remus and Kingsley there. If anyone else is seen the prisoner's will be killed and you shall never see any of their faces again. Remember, this choice is not about me, you or anything which may have happened. We will also capture the townspeople. They will not fair so well if you do not come through either. I have given you a fair warning. Those four people only or your members will be killed. Do not disappoint me further.

She ended the letter and read it to herself out loud. It sounded strange coming from her. She never realised she could be so heartless and cold. She hoped it would send the Order into panic and she knew what Albus was like. He would believe she would murder everyone just to get those four people. Well, it wouldn't Rowena murdering all those people. She would just order for it to be done.

She smiled to herself. This plan could do very right or horribly wrong and Rowena kept getting a sinking feeling that it would be the latter.

The next day on Friday, twenty-ninth of December, Rowena decided it was time to make their mock plan happened. They had chosen a village, far from any others they had ever visited and they had set things up quite nicely. She helped out with the traps, it looked fine to her but she still had her doubts about whether this was going to work or not.

It hadn't been hard for them to take the village. Most of the townspeople were locked together in a basement underneath the city and a silencing charm had been place so no one would be able to hear them when help arrived. Rowena made sure they were secure and she took a place inside the main building in the town. She was with Walden, Bella and Yaxley.

When late afternoon arrived, Walden sent a signal across, and the others responded that they were ready. Rowena kept holding her breath even though she knew nothing was going to happen yet. She nodded once to Walden and he sent the Dark Mark into the sky,

turning it an emerald green. Rowena was beginning to see it as something pretty.

It took a few hours before anything seemed to happen. The Dark Mark was still high in the sky and it was still moving fluently. Rowena and the others were standing near the window and as they heard a small crunching sound, they all crouched down and peered out the window. The first person Rowena saw was Albus. What the hell was he doing here?

‘The roof,’ Bella suggested.

Rowena nodded her agreement and they all walked up the stairs quickly to get to the roof of the building. When Rowena looked down, she was amazed at how high they really were. Albus looked up at her, his glasses causing some glare.

Rowena magnified her voice. ‘What are you doing here Albus?’ she asked loudly. ‘I wanted the four people only.’

‘And the only way you will get them is if you converse with me first,’ said Albus back, his voice also magnified.

‘What do we possibly have to talk about?’ asked Rowena curtly.

‘Many things, Rowena, many things,’ he said. His voice was getting softer but it did not last. ‘Rowena, this needs to stop right now. You need to let them go and give yourself up.’

Beside her, Bella cackled. Rowena thought Albus had gone senile. ‘I’m not giving anything up, especially not myself. I can only imagine what you have planned if I did.’

Albus decided it was time to change the subject. ‘What you did to my brother wasn’t very nice,’ he said, his voice getting louder.

‘Aberforth needed to listen,’ shouted Rowena.

‘He only ever listened to you,’ said Albus. ‘Whenever you fought with me you would contact him and he would fight for you, or have you

forgotten this? He always took your side, even when it seemed foolish. He loves you too, though I am sure he would not admit it freely.'

'I am not Ariana!' Rowena shouted, looking down at Albus.

'I know,' said Albus softly. 'Part of me wished you were but what happened with Ariana was almost unavoidable and sometimes I wished you were her but you are not.'

'Keep talking, Albus, this is good for you,' taunted Rowena. 'You never spoke about Ariana before. Why now?'

'There are many things I have not informed you on,' said Albus. 'Most of which I'm sure I should have but Ariana never concerned you, she-'

'She was your sister,' said Rowena, interrupting. 'You raised me, how could you not think I would like to know about you and your family? What makes Ariana do different? Is Grindelwald one reason?'

'Yes,' admitted Albus. 'Gellert and I were friends but my brother interrupted our plans and Gellert became angry. He tortured Aberforth and Ariana became upset. She wanted to stop it but a three way duel ensued and Ariana was hit by a wayward spell. Whose it was, I do not know and I do not want to know.'

Albus stopped talking but Rowena said nothing, so he continued. 'The day I told you about not going back to Durmstrang, it seemed as though you were about to attack a few innocent Muggles walking by. I saw you and I thought the worst. Ariana had been attacked by three Muggle boys, not much older than herself at the time and ever since she tried to repress her magic. It did not work well. She would have angry outbursts and one led to the death of my mother. I truly believe Ariana's in a better place right now.'

There was another silence and Rowena could feel Albus was going to say more. 'Silence,' she screamed. 'Are the four people I asked for here?'

She no longer wanted to hear about Ariana. What had happened was worse than Rowena thought it to be. She just thought she died from an accident or something simple but no, it had to be a tragedy. Rowena didn't think she could handle this right now. It was more than she wanted to hear. She had wanted to hear about Ariana before but that was before.

'Yes, they are with me,' he said quietly.

'Show me,' she demanded.

'Release some of the townspeople and I shall,' he said back.

Rowena shook her head to herself in anger. She knew Albus would be able to turn the tables and make this play out his way. She wouldn't hear of it.

'Show them, or four of the townspeople die, right now,' she said clearly.

'You won't do that,' said Albus confidently.

'Oh no?' said Rowena slyly, tilting her head slightly.

Without having to be told, Yaxley moved and sent a small signal to the three Death Eaters guarding the entrance to the basement. Without much more time being wasted four people were brought up to the roof top, two were men, one woman and one teenager. Rowena took the woman, Bella took the teenager and Yaxley and Walden each took one of the men.

'Want to change your mind?' Rowena asked Albus.

He shook his head. Rowena nodded to her three Death Eaters and each one of them smiled. At the same time, they all took a knife out of their pockets and slit their victims throat with ease. Blood splattered back and Rowena wiped some of it off her face with her sleeve. Bella cackled again and Rowena looked over. She held the bloody knife up into the fading light and studied it before bringing it to her mouth and licking some of it off with her tongue.

Albus had taken a large step backwards. The four victims struggled and each one eventually fell to the floor heavily and died. Albus had trouble removing the shocked look on his face. He stared up at Rowena; his mind had gone blank for a moment. It was one of the first times that he had become speechless.

‘Are you going to send the four in or are we going to have to kill some more people?’

‘That won't be necessary,’ said Albus firmly.

Rowena and her followers watched as Albus turned and slowly walked away. Once he disappeared Rowena had the area checked. Albus did indeed leave. Rowena signalled for them to wait. She was expecting the Order to burst onto the scene any second, but nothing seemed to happen.

‘I thought Dumbledore would try and take us all on,’ said Bella quietly.

‘No,’ said Rowena thoughtfully. ‘He isn't that stupid.’

It took another fifteen minutes before anything happened. Everyone was alert again when four shadows could be seen around a corner. Rowena's eyes narrowed. When they turned the corner and walked down the same path that Albus had just walked, Rowena saw it was the people she was looking for. They walked down and stopped in front of the building Rowena was on top of. All four of them looked up at her.

She wasn't surprised to see that most of them looked angry. She would have been to if she was in their position. It was Moody that spoke first. ‘You should down off there, it would be unfortunate if you fell.’

‘Get lost, old man,’ shouted Bella. She walked near the edge and leaned over threateningly. ‘You should leave the work for younger Aurors.’

‘Your Master wanted me here,’ said Moody cooly. ‘I thought you’d have more respect for her wishes.’

Arthur then spoke next. ‘Rowena,’ he called out. ‘I want to see my sons.’

‘All in good time,’ she called back.

It went quiet and Rowena looked to Remus. He was looking at her but something was different. Rowena expected him to beg for news about his son but he remained quiet and it didn’t look as though it was going change. Rowena shrugged to herself and walked along the roof a little. She studied the people below her. She knew if she was going to do something to do it now.

She nodded subtly to Walden and he passed on the signal to the other side, but it did not go unnoticed by Moody, who shouted a warning to the other three. Rowena shouted out. ‘Forget it. Get them now!’

The Death Eaters did not wait to hear anything else. They rushed out from their positions and headed towards their targets. Rowena remained where she was and she watched the scene below her. The four Order members scrambled away and the Death Eaters chased them, trying to goad them into the traps prepared.

Rowena gradually lost track of everyone and she waited. She and the other three with her were on watch to see if any other Order members showed up. She knew she told Albus not to send anyone else but he already went himself. That was already a violation of her orders. She also knew Albus would not listen to her, that he wouldn’t want to do things on her terms.

The four of them on the rood jumped when several loud cracks whipped through the air. They all immediately knew it was the Order. Walden, Yaxley and Bella all panicked, they looked at Rowena, who didn’t know what to do either. But she thought quickly and threw her arm into the air.

‘Periculum!’ she shouted.

Hundreds of red spark filled the sky and she heard the shouting retreat around her. They got off the roof and went onto the streets. Walden grabbed her hand and pulled her along. Rowena didn't understand why she had hesitated. She went along with him and together they quickly disappeared back to the manor.

She and Walden waited outside the manor for others to return. People arrived back in pairs and Rowena couldn't but noticed that none of them had yet taken anyone. It angered her. They had planned it so carefully and for so long and she had even helped set up the traps and it seemed it didn't work.

Eventually, the last two people to arrive back were Amycus and Alecko and they were holding someone else between them. It was Remus. Rowena couldn't believe it. She approached the three of them to see if he was really with them. He looked back but still said nothing. She looked to Amycus.

'Take him to a spare cell and chain him up,' she said coldly. She addressed everyone else. She wasn't happy. 'Then I suggest that everyone get into the living room quickly. We're having a meeting, now!'

Everyone got into the manor quickly but Rowena waited outside. She wanted to be calmer before going inside. She knew some people were missing, but if they weren't dead, then they were on their own now. There was nothing she could do for them now. She didn't know who was missing. She saw people but it didn't register who they were. She felt almost blinded by rage.

Walden waited with her. He didn't speak, he only waited patiently. Rowena took a deep breath and nodded once to Walden before heading inside.



## Chapter Thirty-One - Prey

Rowena entered the living room and immediately took her seat at the head of the table. She still wasn't in the mood for any of this. She looked at everyone before saying anything. She tried her hardest to keep her voice steady and calm.

'I'm guessing that tonight didn't go as planned?'

Most people around the table shook their heads. Rowena looked at Amycus and Alecto. 'You both managed to catch Remus?'

'Yes, my Lord,' said Amycus evenly. 'It was a team effort.'

'You shall be rewarded later,' she said politely. They both nodded appreciatively. 'What happened with the other three and why did it seem like the traps weren't used?'

A few shifted in their seats, some looked away. No one wanted to answer her. No one wanted to tell her what went wrong. She sighed inwardly. Did she really have to push someone to talk? She was about to let her anger get the better of her but it was Draco that spoke up. He himself sounded annoyed though Rowena wondered if it was about the mock raid or the fact that his mother was pregnant again.

He sat up straighter in his chair and he cleared his throat. 'It all happened so quickly. I personally believe that the plan was a poor one and I don't think you should have underestimated Dumbledore. He's cleverer than you.'

Gasps of shock went around the room. Rowena looked at Draco in surprise. A people few moved but none more so than Walden but Rowena placed a hand on his arm. 'No, I want to hear what he has to say,' she said in a silkily.

Walden sat back down and they all waited for Draco to continue. At first, Rowena thought he had lost his nerve but he seemed to mentally pull himself together to continue.

'I know he raised you but it does mean you know him better than anyone else here,' started Draco. 'I don't think you've done a bad job but I think your father did better. You aren't him and trying to be isn't helping anyone. I will admit that you seem to be getting better at this but I fear it may be happening to late.

'I know you helped set the traps and I'm sure they might have worked if the plan was thought out more,' said Draco, continuing. 'There should have been more than four traps in place. You must have known this wouldn't work.'

Rowena eyed him. There was something wrong but she couldn't put her finger on it. Was Draco acting strange? She couldn't tell. During each meeting she normally forgot he was there. Draco would never speak or give his opinion on things.

'Then why not say something while we were planning it?' asked Rowena, her eyes narrowing slightly.

Draco slumped in his chair a little and he shrugged his shoulders. 'I don't know,' he said quietly.

'I do,' said Rowena. 'You wanted something to go wrong and you waited. You wanted it to seem like you were thinking but if you had you would have said something earlier. You're a coward Draco. I don't want to hear from you again this meeting.'

The room turned deathly silent. It seemed no one even dared to breathe too loudly. Rowena eventually took her eyes off Draco and she turned to Amycus. 'What happened to the other three?'

He shrugged. 'I am not sure, my Lord,' he said honestly. 'Though, in the beginning we were chasing Kingsley but without warning he seemed to disappear. We don't know what happened. It was then that we saw Lupin and went after him.'

'I don't think you're telling the whole story,' hissed Rabastan.

Everyone looked at him, including Rowena. 'Explain.'

Rabastan's lip curled into a slight sneer. 'You and your sister didn't capture Lupin,' he said bitterly. 'He let himself be captured. He wanted to be. You didn't have to duel with him. Not one spell left either wand. I saw you, as did Rookwood. Lupin let you take him; he wanted to be brought here. Our Lord has his son.'

'Remus let you take him,' said Rowena quietly.

She was looking at Amycus and Alecto as she spoke. They both shifted nervously under her gaze. It was once again quiet. Both of them shrugged. 'I don't know,' said Alecto. 'He kinda let us take him.'

'We still caught him,' said Amycus insistently.

'I think the meetings over,' said Rowena quickly.

She got up and left the room, going straight down to the cells. She found Remus quickly and she threw the door open forcefully. Remus was chained the wall, in the same position Greyback was. His back flat against the wall and his arms out to the side with chains around them, but they left his feet firmly on the ground. Rowena looked him over.

She cleared her throat and Remus lifted his head calmly and looked at her. His blue eyes were focused. 'Where is my son?'

'Why let yourself be captured?' she asked, ignoring his question.

'I want to see my son,' said Remus firmly.

His arms went limp against the restrain and he exhaled sharply. Hanging like this was hard for any amount of time. He moved his feet into a different position but he kept his eyes on Rowena. She wasn't about to let him see Teddy. It was the last thing she wanted to do.

'He's my son,' he said assertively. 'I want to see him.'

Rowena remained still where she was standing and continued to look at Remus. She could tell he was becoming upset with her. It was a good sign.

‘Please,’ plead Remus. ‘I just want to know he’s alive. He needs his mother.’

Rowena opened her mouth but it wasn’t about Teddy. ‘Would you like to see Greyback again?’

Remus said nothing but Rowena knew there was fear there, building slowly. Rowena smiled faintly and left the room and she returned to her chambers. She needed time to think.

The next night, Rowena was once again in her bed chambers. She was watching Teddy. He was sitting at a small table. He was drawing something. Rowena couldn’t see what it was but she was sure she had pretty good idea what it was of. She knew Teddy wanted his parents but though he never said anything. He never had to. Rowena could see it. It was written all over his face.

Only once he mentioned his parents and Rowena had yelled at him. Since then he hasn’t mentioned them. She knew she had scared him then. She hadn’t meant to, it just happened. She continued to watch him. If she was completely truthful, she was scared of losing Teddy.

He wasn’t her son, but he felt like it. She raised him since he was three. She knew she didn’t have the right to keep him but she just wanted a little longer with him. He was a sweet boy. She felt a small amount of rage rush through her veins. She hated that his father was a werewolf. How could he do this to a beautiful child?

Though, Rowena did think about what Remus had said last night. Teddy did need his mother, but ... wasn’t she good enough for him? She never hit Teddy, she had only yelled at him once and she usually gave him whatever he wanted. Does it mean she did a bad job? She tried to do right by Teddy but it wasn’t always easy but he was a quiet child and sometimes he still was but Rowena saw it as a good thing.

She sat down on her bed and she steadied herself. ‘Teddy,’ she called softly. His head turned to look at her. ‘Come over here. I want to talk to you.’

Teddy moved his legs from under the table and swung them outwards. He stood and approached Rowena. She sat him on her lap and stroked his fringe from his face while looking down at him. He looked back, his blue eyes bright and shiny. He held onto Rowena and waited to hear what she wanted.

‘You know I care about you, right?’

Teddy nodded silently. Rowena breathed deeply. ‘Good,’ she said softly. ‘How would you feel if I told you that ... your father was here?’

Teddy’s eyes lit up with happiness. ‘Where?’ he asked excitedly, looking around.

‘Would you want to go with him?’ she asked, her voice becoming hoarse.

Teddy looked away from Rowena slowly. He appeared to hesitate about answering. Rowena stroked his hair gently. ‘It’s Ok,’ she said. ‘You can be honest.’

He slowly looked at her again and it took him a while to do anything. He gradually nodded his head really slowly. His eyes filling with fear. She knew he was scared of being punished for wanting to go back home. Rowena nodded herself. ‘Ok, you can go back to playing.’

Teddy hopped off her lap and went back to the table. He rubbed his arm gently. He sat down at the table and eventually picked up a pencil and continued to draw. Rowena sighed airily. She wasn’t going to give him up. She didn’t want to.

When January thirteenth arrived, Rowena had not spoken to Remus again. She couldn’t. Otherwise she would have to face up about having his son. She wasn’t going to give Teddy up. But on this day, she thought it was time to see if there was something else she could offer to Greyback. She was sure there was something else he might consider.

She entered the cells alone and walked to the one containing Greyback. She opened it with her wand and walked inside and closed

the door. She didn't want anyone overhearing but she was sure it wouldn't matter either way. Greyback growled faintly as she walked in. It made Rowena think twice about going in there alone but she decided to risk it, but she kept her wand out and in her hand firmly.

The cell and Greyback were looking worse than ever and it smelt terrible. She had started wonder how Greyback could put up with it but then she stopped. It was Greyback she was talking about. Remus was considered human and sane next to Greyback. He was an absolute animal; there wasn't much about Greyback that would be considered anywhere near human.

'Hello, Fenrir,' she said calmly. 'I've come to offer you something.'

Greyback only growled in response. Rowena lowered her eyes for a moment. 'Our mock raid didn't go to plan...'

'I know,' growled Greyback. 'I heard.'

'Then you must also have heard that Remus was captured.'

'Lupin,' muttered Greyback. 'Where is he?'

'In the cell next to this one,' replied Rowena. 'Can you not smell him?'

'No,' he growled. 'But I could smell his scent on you.'

'Really?' said Rowena. 'I haven't touched Remus.'

'No, but you've been near him.'

Rowena nodded. She didn't quite understand werewolves and she didn't really care. She was only interested in calming Greyback down and giving him something so he wouldn't attack her again, but if he accepted she would release him but she would make sure to keep many pairs of eyes on him at all times.

She moved on. 'I want to offer you something else,' she repeated. 'I'm offering Remus to you, but you are not allowed to kill him.'

‘Why?’ he rasped.

‘Because I have something else planned,’ she replied. ‘But when the time comes for Remus to die, I promise you this, you will be the one allowed to have him.’

Rowena could tell that Greyback was thinking it over carefully. His eyes looked between Rowena’s; waiting to see if there was any treachery there but there was none. Rowena would keep her word. Greyback could have Remus in the end, if he wanted him.

‘What can I do to him now?’ asked Greyback.

‘Anything you want,’ replied Rowena. ‘As long as it doesn’t kill him.’

Greyback took some more time and he thought it over. Rowena patiently waited. She wanted an answer now but she was willing to give him time to think it over. Rowena unconsciously crossed her arms over her chest and she leaned against the closed door.

When Greyback made up his mind he pulled against his chains and leaned forwards, his eyes shining with excitement. Rowena could see him almost drooling at the mouth. ‘I agree with your terms,’ he hissed through his teeth. ‘What about my pack though?’

‘They will not be returning,’ said Rowena. ‘If I let you rejoin us, it must be on your own.’

‘Fine,’ he hissed louder. ‘I want some fun with Lupin now.’

‘Where shall I put him?’ asked Rowena as she opened the cell door.

‘Can a labyrinth be put in the backyard?’ he asked, raising an eyebrow.

Rowena gave it a little thought. ‘Yes, I’m sure that can be done. I shall instruct a couple of people to do it and then I shall return to unchain you.’

She turned to leave the cell but changed her mind and looked back at Greyback with a finger pointed at him. 'Remember Fenrir, if you attack me or anyone else under me, I shall not be so lenient next time and neither shall Walden.'

Greyback nodded and Rowena left the cell. She informed everyone else, who were still sitting in the living room. She got Bella and Yaxley to set up the labyrinth and she got Rabastan and Dolohov to retrieve Remus and hold him outside. Rowena then went to get Greyback but Walden grabbed her just before entering the cells. Both Rabastan and Dolohov saw him grab her and they both stared but quickly pulled themselves together and moved on.

Rowena stopped and looked at Walden questioningly. Her stare made Walden let her go instantly. He had forgotten himself. 'My Lord,' he whispered. 'You cannot get Greyback on your own.'

'You forget your place,' she hissed lightly to Walden. 'I decide what happens and you should accept it without question. Is that understood?'

'Yes, my Lord,' he whispered inaudibly.

She nodded once and went down to the cells. Rabastan and Dolohov walked past her, holding Remus between them. His face was pure white and he suddenly came to life once seeing Rowena.

'What are you doing?' he yelled. 'Rowena, please ... please, don't do this!'

Rowena pretended not to hear anything and she continued to walking to Greyback's cell. She unlocked the door and opened it widely. She walked over to him and stood close. She watched Greyback sniff her. She ignored it. She pointed her wand at his chest.

'I do not want any more trouble from you, is that understood?' she asked firmly.

Greyback nodded but he had something else on his mind. 'So, what's Macnair like?'



Rowena's eyes narrowed at Greyback and he forced her wand up under his chin. She pressed hard, to make sure he was getting the message. Her voice turned to a low hiss but the tone was commanding. 'I'm going to pretend I did not just hear that and I would suggest you keep those thoughts to yourself if you want to stay alive.'

'Yes ... my Lord.'

Rowena took one step back but remained in front of him. With a wave of her wand, the chains released Greyback and seemed to melt into the wall behind him. He fell to the floor and it took him a long moment before he was able to stand. His strength returned quicker than Rowena had thought it would but she remained firm with her position. She wasn't scared of him. He was just an animal.

Once he was standing up straight, they looked at each other. The moment seemed to never end although Rowena knew only a few seconds had passed. Greyback moved passed her and Rowena turned her body. He walked from the cell and Rowena walked behind him. They left the cells and went upstairs and down the hallway until they reached the back door.

Greyback didn't hesitate to open the back door and walk outside with Rowena behind him. When outside Rowena noticed all Death Eaters were here and they all became on alert when Greyback entered the backyard. Rowena looked to Lupin. He was legs gave way and his body attempted to fall to the ground but Rabastan and Dolohov kept hold of him.

'Release him,' growled Greyback.

Rowena nodded to Rabastan and Dolohov and they let go of Remus and he took the first opportunity, he ran into the maze. Rowena thought it foolish. It was going to happen one way or another. Greyback waited twenty minutes before going in after him.

Rowena waited until Greyback disappeared before going back inside. She went up to her bed chambers and Walden followed. She made a door and placed a high balcony outside, but she concealed it, so no

one would see her. She stepped out and Walden followed. Rowena expected him to. Once they were both out she closed the door and made sure no one could see them. They were fine.

They could see inside the whole maze. Rowena wanted to make sure Greyback didn't kill Remus and she wanted to make sure of it herself. When Greyback started in the maze, Rowena held her breath. She had told Greyback not to kill Remus, but she hoped he would listen to her and heed her warning. She did mean what she said. He would die if he killed Remus.

Rowena's eyes found Remus quickly. He was six lanes away from Greyback. He hadn't gotten that far. Remus ran as quickly as he could but his legs were rapidly becoming numb with exhaustion. Greyback was quickly catching up to him.

He laughed loudly, everyone could hear it. 'I can smell you, Lupin,' rasped Greyback.

Rowena frowned faintly but ignored it. Fear could almost be smelled in the air, it was thick and heavy. It did not take much longer for Greyback to corner Remus. He was leaning against a hedge, double over and panting. It was then that Rowena thought they should have looked after Remus a little better. She had never meant to starve him.

Remus tried to run past Greyback but was more than a useless effort. Greyback stood in the way. Remus stopped and he took a step back. He turned to run in another direction but he didn't get far. A roar filled Remus' ears and a second later, a huge, muscled body crashed down on him, and his body falling flat on the grassy ground.

'No,' screamed Remus as he scrambled at the leaves beneath him and coughing when he was beginning to run out of breath.

'Oh, yes,' growled Greyback as he moved forwards and straddled Remus body.

The harsh breath heated the back of Remus' already sweltering neck, and Remus flinched away from it. Beads of sweat dripped across his forehead, and he blinked them out of his eyes.

'I had hoped you missed me Remus,' cooed Greyback. He stroked Remus' back with his large hands, his nails scraping down the shabby clothing. 'You were such a small child. Your father was nothing but a bloody fool. He argued with me, told me I was being stupid. He called me ignorant. Well, I couldn't let him get away with that.'

Greyback paused but Remus said nothing, he just continued to pant heavily. 'I bet your father hated himself when he found out what I had done. I must admit though, you were quite ... delicious. Your skin was soft and the smell alone made my mouth water at the prospect of tasting you.'

Hearing those words made Remus shiver and turned his skin cold. He couldn't forget that night either. He was only a child. He would never forget it. After it, his father could hardly look at him. It broke his heart. Remus shut his eyes but opened them quickly. He had more pressing things happening right now.

Greyback flipped Remus onto his back and he made Remus looked at him. Fear flooded Remus' eyes. Greyback smiled at what he saw. He pinned Remus to the ground and to his surprise Remus didn't squirm much. Maybe he was hoping for leniency.

Above him, Greyback's grey eyes were narrowed into slits; his nostrils were flaring as he sniffed behind Remus' ear. He inhaled deeply, before plunging his nose into Remus' light brown hair, taking in rapid sniffs.

Greyback began to growl again. Greyback licked Remus' neck and Remus quivered faintly and Greyback's pupils dilated. He flexed his thighs around Remus and lowered himself to his elbows so that he was lying directly atop the body beneath him that was smaller than his.

When that happened Remus began to panic. He attempted to push Greyback off but failed. Greyback just laughed at his efforts. Greyback licked his sharp, yellow teeth in an obscene way; Remus couldn't deny the lascivious nature of the slurping sound.

'You still taste and smell delicious, Remus,' he commented.

Greyback moved so quickly that Remus barely had time to react. His clothes were ripped from his body swiftly and Greyback also removed his own. Remus continued to try and fight Greyback. He didn't want this to happen again. But he didn't get anywhere. Greyback forced Remus' legs apart. Remus managed to move one arm and he struck Greyback's face.

They both stopped and it felt like everything else stopped but Remus quickly moved and managed to kick Greyback and he was able to get away. But it didn't last long. Greyback recovered quickly and caught Remus and pushed him to his stomach.

Greyback looked down at Remus' scarred and snow-white back, the shoulder blades moving frantically. He gripped Remus' biceps and lowered his tongue to the top of his spine, then dragged it slowly down, relishing Remus' mantra becoming louder. When his tongue reached the bottom he stopped. Greyback straightened himself. His own inhuman erection pressed against Remus' behind.

He grinded himself against Remus, before shoving the man's thighs apart with a knee before settling down. He snaked his arms under and around Remus' arms and he began to graze his canines across his back, letting his tongue lap at the collecting sweat. It was heaven for Greyback.

Remus could remember the last time he felt this helpless and he had promised himself it wouldn't happen again but it was and there was nothing stopping it. He had a feeling that Rowena was watching this. He hoped she enjoyed it.

Remus dug his fingers into the ground; his silent tears fell sideways down his face and fell onto the grass. The beast on him was so heavy and too strong, and too big and whenever he tried to move, he only succeeded in being pressed to the ground harder. He whimpered when his legs were kicked apart, and gagged with fear when he felt Greyback's erection settle against his behind.

He was big, too big. Remus wanted to think that there was no possible chance that it would fit but he knew he was being foolish. He already knew it would fit. Remus whimpered again. 'No, no, no, no,' he repeated in his agony.

'Oh, yes, my sweet little puppy,' whispered Greyback. 'You can whimper all you want. I love the sound.'

Greyback licked his neck, then grazed his teeth along Remus' skin and then a sucking sensation followed the taunt. Greyback continued to lick, nip and suck and one of his clawed hands slid down Remus' body, enjoying the shivers his nails produced. Greyback lifted himself off Remus' body for a moment, so he could enjoy the sight of his body. It was scared but it was so perfect.

Greyback bared his teeth in a predatory grin, and grasped Remus' hips before yanking them up. Quickly, he reached around curled his hand around his younger cock and began to squeeze and pull. He no longer had to hold Remus in place. He wasn't even struggling anymore; just curling in on himself, whimpering and pressing his thighs together, as though hoping it would stop him. Greyback just laughed and moved forwards, moulding his body to Remus', releasing the half-hard cock.

'I'm sure you know what to do,' said Greyback into Remus' ear, darting his tongue out for a lick. 'There's a good reason they call it doggie style. Now, roll over.'

Remus didn't move, so Greyback shoved his hip against him and he reared up onto his knees. He grabbed Remus' slender hips in his clawed hands and pulled his behind up, so that his back was arched. Greyback grinned, before lowering his mouth to the end of Remus' spine.

Remus whimpered at the uncomfortable position his back was in. He knew it would ease the pressure if he got to his knees but he refused to make this easier for the beast behind him. He bit his lips when he felt the rough lick of a tongue against the top of his bottom. Remus' eyes widened. Was Greyback going to ... lick him ... down there? An urge to vomit made itself known. Merlin, it was such an animalistic

thing to do. He stopped the vomit from leaving his mouth as sharp claws dug into his sides, so he focused on that, instead of the tongue that was beginning to travel down in between...

Greyback's cock was now leaking continually. The taste and smell of Remus was incredible. He suddenly wondered why he didn't seek Remus out earlier. He tongued Remus' tight hole ruthlessly, eager to feel it open and contract, shyly letting him in. He gave a sharp nip to one of the cheeks and he enjoyed the whimper it produced. Remus was so fun to play with.

When Greyback stopped thrusting his tongue inside him, Remus was glad. His face had turned so hot that he thought it would explode, and he felt even more violated than when Greyback touched his cock. He hated the feeling of his hole opening like ... like he had liked it. Remus had before had urges to be with other werewolves, even males but he always stopped himself.

He was trembling with shame by the time Greyback rose once more and stretched out against Remus' arched back. Greyback shoved his head down next to Remus' and nuzzled his ear and neck.

'I've been very gentle with you up until now, puppy, but I can't hold back much longer. As you know, it's not in my nature. So, brace yourself... I'm gonna rip you apart.' The larger werewolf concluded his statement with an almost loving lick up the side of Remus' heated face.

Greyback position his now slicked cock at Remus' entrance. He put on arm down to the ground, resting his forearm beside Remus' elbows and clung to the small hip with the other. He rested his head between Remus' shoulder blades and then he began to push.

Immediately, Remus yowled and it made Greyback smile his teeth-baring smile, then he surged forwards powerfully, throwing his own head back and letting go a howl of his own. Remus' whines, groans and whimpers fuelled his arousal, and with another growl he slammed forward, breaking the tight ring of muscle and the scent of blood filled his sensitive nose.

He roared then, so turned on that he forced himself completely inside his new mate, scratching his teeth against a quaking shoulder, his clawed hand digging into Remus' side. He began to slam his hips back and forth with a monstrous quality, all the while his ears feasting on Remus' yelps. His chest heaved with the effort he put forth, and he then completely mounted Remus, shoving himself completely inside with each thrust.

After what felt like hours, Greyback howled his climax to the rising moon and he collapsed on top of his new mate, crushing Remus beneath him. Remus could still breathe but Greyback was heavier than he. As Remus lay there, his thoughts turned to his son. If this was what he had to do to see him again, he would do anything.

He let more tears leave his eyes. There was nothing left to hide anymore.

## Chapter Thirty-Two - Release

Tonks paced the living room at Grimmauld Place. They were having another meeting in half-an-hour. Tonks was early. She didn't have any reason to be late now. Her son was in the hands of Rowena and her husband was there somewhere. She was no longer sure if either of them still lived.

Her appearance had changed. Her hair was now a dull, mousy brown and her blue eyes had lost their brightness. She felt similar to when she was first in love with Remus and he kept rejecting her. He finally accepted but Tonks was not sure he ever really wanted it. He said he loved her, but she was never confident that it was genuine but she loved him greatly. She knew she would never love anyone like she loved Remus. He was special. Though, he always failed to see it.

She hugged herself and looked at the clock. Only five minutes had passed. She sighed heavily. She was nervous about everything now. She wanted to find Remus. She felt as though it were becoming hopeless. They had searched and searched but they never found anything. She still had her parents but it wasn't the same and she knew she had her friends but that wasn't the same without her family either.

The living room door opened and Hermione walked in. As soon as she spotted Tonks, she froze. Their eyes met and it seemed as though the world stopped. Hermione wasn't sure what to do or if she should say anything. She decided to turn and leave the room.

'Just going to walk away,' said Tonks loudly.

Hermione stopped and looked at Tonks again. She shrugged lightly. 'I don't have anything to say to you,' she said.

'Really?' said Tonks, scoffing. 'How about trying to steal my husband?'

'I never tried to steal him,' said Hermione calmly. 'He has the same feelings.'



‘So, you love him too?’

Hermione shrugged again. ‘I don’t know. Many things have happened. He has helped me and been there for me many times in the past and he was there after Ron hit me. I think highly of him.’

‘You kissed him,’ said Tonks, her voice still getting louder.

‘Yes, I did,’ she admitted. ‘But Remus kissed me back. We both wanted it and we both wanted it to go further but we didn’t. We knew it was wrong.’

‘And that makes it alright, does it?’

‘No, it doesn’t,’ said Hermione, her voice still calm. ‘Nothing more will happen with Remus, I promise.’

Tonks nodded and Hermione left the room as quickly as possible. Tonks didn’t believe Hermione. She knew all the little looks will still go on, if Remus came back. When the meeting started Tonks went down into the kitchen and she sat beside Sirius. He was one of the only people she now spoke to about anything.

She listened as the meeting kept going but after an hour Remus and her son hadn’t been mentioned. She slammed her hands down on the table, open palmed and she stood up. Her eyes scanned everyone before her. She was sick of hearing about attack plans and tactical things they could do.

‘Something wrong, Nymphadora?’ asked Dumbledore.

‘Yes,’ she said tensely. ‘I want to know why we aren’t planning to find Remus, and Teddy, and Bill and the others.’

‘We have tried,’ said Dumbledore calmly. ‘And nothing has come of it. We have to be patient. We could probably search for Rowena and the Death Eaters for a hundred years and never find them. We need a break. We need to find another way to her.’

Tonks lost her patience. She kicked the chair away from her in anger and left the room, slamming the kitchen door behind her. Everyone looked around at each other but it was Moody that offered. 'I'll talk to her,' he said gruffly.

He too left the room and went to the living room. He knew Tonks had arrived earlier. She had nothing else but the Order right now. Moody entered the room and found Tonks leaning against one of the walls. He walked over to her but she didn't move, or acknowledge his presence.

'I know you're frustrated,' he said in an unusually soft voice. 'But many people are. Molly and Arthur are feeling like you are now. Do not think you're the only one having a hard time right now. And, yes, I do know that people handle things differently, but I would like to think that I instructed you better than this.'

Tonks sighed and looked up into Moody's scarred face. He was right and she knew it. She nodded. 'I know. You taught me better. It's just ... I feel ... I'm frustrated. I don't feel like enough is being done.'

'I know,' said Moody. 'But we're doing everything we can for the moment. We will get them both back, but you have to be patient and you need to keep being strong. I'm sure Ted would like to see his mother happy and healthy, glad for his return.'

She nodded. Silence passed between them but Tonks understood the looks she was getting from him. She returned to the kitchen with Moody following behind.

Rowena stood at the window in her bed chambers. She watched a few Death Eaters in the backyard. She had gotten rid of the balcony. She didn't want to see that again. It was now the second of February and Remus was still here but now he slept in the same room as Greyback. Rowena hadn't seen him since the labyrinth but she knew he was still alive.

Things between her and Walden were still on and they were still sleeping together, but it was becoming less often and Walden always made it clear what he wanted. But if Rowena pushed him away he

would respect it but he still didn't like it. This was one thing Rowena always wanted to avoid, relationships and attachment. It never turns out well.

After a few minutes, Rowena felt a presence behind her. She knew it was Walden. He placed his arms around her and Rowena's body tensed. Walden felt it but he didn't let go. He kissed behind her ear gently. There was quite an age difference between them but neither of them cared. Walden was younger than Rowena expected. She hesitantly moved her hands and placed them on Walden's arms.

Suddenly, a loud thud at the chamber door, made Rowena and Walden jump. He released her and whipped his wand out, pointing it at the door. There came another thud at the door within seconds. Walden approached it cautiously and opened it with his arm outstretched.

It was Rabastan on the other side. Rowena walked over and stood beside Walden. She looked at Rabastan questioningly but he said nothing.

'What is it?' she asked quietly.

'Lupin wants to speak with you,' he said quickly.

Rowena frowned. 'Why are you delivering the message?'

'I think you should see him now,' he said even faster, his words almost overlapping each other.

'Why?' asked Rowena forcefully.

'I think Greyback's losing it... he's ... I don't think Lupin's gonna last much longer.'

Hearing that made Rowena react quickly, both she and Walden ran down to the third floor. She wrenched the door opened and the sight she saw stunned her. Remus was lying on his side on the dusty floor and Greyback seemed to be tearing into him. Rowena could hear no noise coming from Remus and he wasn't moving.

'Stupefy!' shouted Rowena.

The spell hit Greyback in the back. He stiffened and fell to the ground heavily. Rowena ran over to Remus and placed her fingers on his neck. There was a pulse but it was faint. When she removed her fingers she looked at them. They were covered in Remus' blood. Her hand shook and her eyes widened. His blood was on her.

She stood up, her legs shaking lightly and she looked at Walden. 'Take him to Madam Pomfrey,' she said, her voice a little shaky. 'I want to know instantly when he's awake, I want to talk to him.'

Walden nodded and moved quickly. He took Remus from the room with Rabastan's help and they took him to the medical room. Rowena finally looked away from her bloodied hand and looked at Greyback. He almost killed Remus. He was still in the woods though, she knew that. If Remus died from this she would make sure to kill Greyback but if Remus lived he will still be punished but it won't be that severe.

She looked to Greyback. He should be locked in here until it is known how Remus will fare from this. She left the room and locked the outside. She returned to her room and went straight into the adjoining bathroom. She turned the cold water tap on and placed her hand underneath instantly. She knew she couldn't be infected this way but it still scared her.

Once the blood was gone, she almost scrubbed her hand raw by rubbing it roughly with her other hand. She wanted to make sure it was gone. She didn't want to be like him. It scared her. She hated their kind. She did tolerate Greyback's presence. She never liked it but she knew most people were scared of him. It was a useful thing to have around.

Besides, she knew her father hadn't cared much about Greyback either and Rowena was sure he was aware of it but her father tolerated his presence too. He also thought Greyback was useful to have around and, of course, she knew Greyback got his victims from her father and he was sometimes called to do his bidding, which Rowena knew Greyback liked anyway.

When her hand was clean she went back into her room and sat on the bed. Teddy had stopped and looked up at her when she first entered the room and he had waited for her to leave the bathroom. Rowena looked at him and gave him a small smile. Teddy returned it and went back to playing. Rowena sighed. She wasn't ready for this.

The next morning, Rowena went to the medical room. She had been told that Remus was awake. Madam Pomfrey said Remus was lucky to be alive. She walked to the end of his bed and looked at him. He was lying on his back. He had been looking up at the ceiling but the sound of someone coming closer made him look towards the person. His facial expression did not change.

Rowena looked him over. He looked much better than he did last night. At the moment, Greyback was still locked in his room. Rowena wasn't quite sure what to do with him anymore. 'How do you feel?' she asked softly.

'How do you think?' he replied.

'I heard you're lucky to be alive,' she said, ignoring his tone and question.

'Lucky isn't quite how I would put it,' he said bitterly.

Rowena folded her arms across her chest. It was time to come clean. She sighed inwardly. 'I do have your son.'

Remus suddenly came to life but he said nothing. He leaned up a little and winced but he ignored it. Rowena continued. 'He's alive and he's safe. I never intended on harming him. I came to see him as my own.'

She paused, waiting to see if Remus would say something but still, he didn't. 'I'm going to let him go back,' she said quietly. 'You as well. I'm sorry for what Greyback did. I never meant for you to get hurt that much. I used you. I wanted Greyback to accept another offer.'

'Offer? What do you mean?' asked Remus, frowning.

'Greyback wanted your son because he's not a full werewolf and I didn't let him. I protected your son. I might hate you but Teddy isn't you. I offered you to Greyback in exchange for your son; the only condition was that he was not to kill you. He almost went back on that and he will be punished severely for it. I will let you both leave when you are able.'

Rowena left the room and Remus stared after her in shock. It was the last thing he expected to happen. He lay back down on the bed and stared at the ceiling. He couldn't wait to see the look on Tonks' face when he arrived back with their son.

Later that same day, they had another meeting. Rowena sat in her usual place as did everyone else. She looked everyone over. She thought it was time to get this over with. She wanted the Order gone. She knew Remus was still in the medical room recovering she wanted him to stay there until he was completely healthy and ready to go.

She didn't want to take the chance of him leaving the room and being hurt again or even possibly killed. Once everyone was settled, she started the meeting.

'Alright, I know some of you have already heard that I'm letting Remus Lupin go, and that is true. I have decided to let him leave with his son.'

'Why?' blurted Bella.

Rowena looked at her. 'Because Teddy needs to be with his parents,' she replied calmly. 'And if Remus is to die in this war then I think he should have what time he has left to be with his son and wife.'

It went quiet. No one wanted to say anything against her. Rowena was the person in charge and that's the way it was. Of all the people in the room right now, the only one that had the biggest problem with this was Draco and he made it known. He looked unhappy.

'What about the other people?' he asked gently.

Rowena shrugged. 'I do not know,' she said truthfully. 'I haven't decided whether to let them go or not.'

'Why let them go?' asked Walden.

Rowena shrugged. 'I do not know,' she repeated. 'I suggest if you want some fun with any of them then do it soon while I think about what to do with them. Meeting's over.'

She left the room abruptly and returned to her bed chambers. Walden entered not long after. Teddy was still on the floor with his toys. Walden closed the door roughly and strode over to Rowena. He forced her to look at him.

'What are you doing?' he asked loudly.

'I don't know what you're talking about,' she said quietly.

'You're going to let all the prisoners go! Are you insane? Have you lost your mind? Since when did you decided to end things?'

'I still don't know what you're talking about,' said Rowena softly. Her voice was low and dangerous. 'I suggest you unhand me.'

Walden obeyed and he released Rowena's arm. She moved away but Walden wasn't finished. 'I want an answer from you!'

'I don't answer to you,' said Rowena loudly, rounding on him. The anger which had been building inside was now free. 'I'm not ending anything. This group will still go on but I don't want other people to suffer because of it.'

'You're not like your father,' said Walden quietly.

'No, I'm not,' admitted Rowena. 'And I'm proud not to be. He was a cold hearted murderer. That's not who I am and it's not who I want to be. I have killed people and I'm not pretending I haven't enjoyed it but I'm not going to kill people for no reason.'

'If those people in the cells are going to die then let it be on a battlefield instead of slaughtering them like animals in a cage,' she continued angrily. 'If we're supposed to fight then let it be with honour and dignity!'

Walden lost himself again. He grabbed Rowena roughly and forced her to face him again. Before she could say anything he crushed their lips together in a fierce kiss. Rowena was stunned but she relaxed and let it happen. She wrapped her arms around his neck and the kiss deepened. She moaned softly into his mouth and he placed one hand on the back of her head and the other on the small of her back, attempting to pull her even closer to him.

When they broke apart they both looked down and between them. Teddy was standing there looking between both of them. He wasn't holding anything. His blue eyes stopped and stayed on Rowena. He looked upset. Rowena looked at Walden. 'Check on the others,' she mouthed.

He nodded and left the room. Rowena took a deep breath and she took Teddy over to the bed and sat down with him. 'There's no reason to be upset. Nothing happening.'

'He hurt you?'

'No, he didn't, it's all alright,' she said stroking his hair. 'Hey, I have a surprise for you.'

'What is it?' asked Teddy softly.

'Remember I told you that your father was here?'

Teddy just nodded. 'Well, I've decided to let you and him go home. Would you like that?'

Teddy nodded again. He moved onto Rowena's lap and gave her a hug. Rowena hugged him back. She didn't really want to let Teddy go but she knew it was the right thing to do. He belonged with his family.



Just after midnight on the same day, the chamber room door opened and Walden walked. He approached Rowena's chair and he knelt down. Rowena looked to him.

'My Lord,' he whispered. 'The others have a surprise for you.'

'What is it?'

'Well, then it wouldn't be a surprise, would it?' said Walden, smiling cheekily.

'What is it?' repeated Rowena firmly.

'They want to put on a show for you,' he said, still smiling.

'With the prisoners, you mean?'

Walden nodded. 'Yes, except for Lupin and Teddy, of course.'

Rowena nodded. 'Alright. I suppose I could watch it.'

Walden winked at her and Rowena rolled her eyes. She knew what he was thinking and it wasn't going to happen. She stood up from her chair and walked over to Teddy. She was surprised he was still awake. She walked over and bent down gently next to him.

'You should be going to bed soon, alright?'

Teddy just nodded and continued his drawing. 'Am I going home?'

'Yes, but it will be tomorrow or the day after,' said Rowena. 'It won't be right now. You should go to bed soon. I'm going downstairs, alright? If you need anything then just see Madam Pomfrey quickly but don't disturb any of her patients.'

Teddy nodded again but it didn't disrupt his drawing. Rowena stood up again and she followed Walden into the living room. The room had been large before but it had been made even larger. She looked around and in the middle of the room were Hannah, Fleur, Bill and Charlie. Rowena wondered if they were going to use Bill and Charlie

too. She didn't know if any of them were gay, it didn't really matter, but for some reason she felt surprised.

Rowena saw a large, comfortable looking black chair sitting on one side of the room in the centre. Walden pointed to it. 'The seats for you.'

Rowena nodded and walked over to it and she sat down. The people in the room included herself, Walden, Bella, Evan, Selwyn, Alecto, Amycus, Dolohov, Mulicber, Fenrir, Rookwood, Yaxley, Rabastan and Avery. It made Rowena wonder where everyone else was.

She crooked her finger at Walden and he bent down. 'Where's everyone else?'

'Some didn't want to be part of this,' he said quietly. 'Besides, most of us want it to be like old times, except that the show isn't for Voldemort.'

'I see,' she said, then raised her voice so everyone could hear. 'Well... do what you normally do then; just pretend I'm not here.'

The Death Eaters nodded and went on with it. Rowena watched. Amycus and Alecto went to one side of the room and they touched only each other but they watched the others as they did. Rowena knew they must have planned this beforehand. Bella and Thorfinn took Charlie to one side. Bella began playing with him while Thorfinn held him in place.

Dolohov and Mulicber took Fleur while Fenrir and Rookwood took Bill. It didn't surprise Rowena all that much. Fenrir was the one that had bitten Bill, why wouldn't he want to rape and humiliate him? Yaxley, Rabastan and Avery stood back and watched.

Rowena watched each one carefully. She was quite curious but she did hope nothing went too gross or extreme. She was quite inexperienced when it came to sexual things but she was still curious. She looked over at Bella. Thorfinn kicked Charlie in the back of the legs and he fell to his knees. No sound came from Charlie. Bella

laughed quietly and bent down. She ran her hands through his unruly red hair, making it messier.

She leaned forwards and planted a small, gentle kiss on his lips. Charlie didn't move away. He let it happen. Bella chuckled again quietly. She ran her index finger around the frame of his face. Charlie watched her. Bella's demeanour suddenly changed and she slapped Charlie on the cheek forcefully. His head flung to the side and red splotch marks appeared quickly.

Charlie didn't look at her again. Bella smiled and took out her wand. She pointed it at Charlie's chest and on the other side of the room, Bill noticed what was happening. He attempted to free himself to get to his brother but it was useless. Fenrir held him in place.

'You're not going where anywhere little puppy,' purred Greyback.

He pulled on Bill's long hair, making sure he didn't go anywhere. Rowena looked back to Bella, who now had Charlie naked and still on his knees. She ran her hands over his hairless chest and she smiled, her white teeth glowing in the dull light. Rowena couldn't help but watch Bella. Even Amycus and Alecto were watching Bella.

Rowena decided to look somewhere else and she turned her attention onto Dolohov and Mulicber, who were having fun with Fleur. Mulicber hold Fleur in place while Dolohov continues his fun with her. He takes one nipple into his mouth and sucks while caressing the other hand in the palm of his hand. He circles the areola with his thumb until the nipple hardens. He drags his teeth gently over the sensitive bud in his mouth, drawing it out with a "pop".

He then trails his tongue across her skin until he reaches the other side. He teases the taut peak with the tip of this tongue before sucking it into his mouth as he pinches the other one.

He straightens on his feet and takes out his wand. He conjures a small bed in the room and they lay Fleur atop of it, flat on her back. She doesn't fight as she is restrained to each post but Rowena can tell she's not enjoying it. They all know this will happen one way or another.

Dolohov stands up again properly and looks down at Fleur. He removes her clothes gently and slowly as though he has all the time in the world and places them carelessly on the floor. Once naked, he takes her body in again. Rowena looked at Fleur also. Her body was perfect. It looked so flawless and pale, like a porcelain doll.

Her eyes are closed and her breathing is hard. Her cheeks are lightly flushed and her nipples stand high and firm on her swollen breasts. Fleur still does not fight against her restraints. Dolohov moves swiftly and reaches down to caress and pinch her nipples again, eliciting a small, soft gasp from Fleur's pale lips. His face turns into a twisted smile and he lowers his mouth to taste her heated flesh.

He kisses his way down her stomach which trembles beneath his lips. When he reaches her belly button, he pauses and teases it with his tongue for several moments before continuing his journey downward. When reaching her pubic mound, which was a beautifully trimmed thatch of light, silvery blonde curls, he inhales deeply, enjoying the scent of salt, sweat and pure woman.

The smile on his face widened. It had been a while since he had been this close to a woman, and a beautiful one at that. Dolohov positioned himself on the bed, comfortably between Fleur's thighs and he bent down to kiss her nether region gently. He then spreads her open with his fingers, delighted to see that she is soaking wet, just for him. Her clit is standing at attention, pink and hard. He blows on it gently and she cried out in exasperation.

On the other side of the bed Mulicber watched and once Dolohov was on the bed, he decided it was a good time to join in. He got on the bed too, but further up Fleur's body. He settled himself on her chest and pressed his groin area into her face. Fleur scrunched her face together in disgust and he shut her eyes tight. She pulled against her restraints but it did nothing but tire her out.

She arched her back when Dolohov dipped his head and ran his tongue along her folds and over her clit. She didn't make a sound. She was trying her hardest to keep it in. Mulicber undid his trousers and forced his cock into Fleur's mouth. She eventually accepted it

after much forced and she squealed lightly. Dolohov smiled at the commotion above him and he freed his own erection and he lifted Fleur's hips and slammed himself deep inside her with a single stroke.

She was hot, wet and so unbelievably tight. He pumped his hips, driving in and out harder and faster. Before long Fleur raised her hips. Rowena wasn't sure if it meant she was enjoying it or just wanted it over with. Rowena assumed it was more the latter and former. Mulicber came first, spilling himself inside and around her mouth. She gagged and coughed. Mulicber removed himself from Fleur and watched Dolohov, who felt his balls tighten and he slammed home one more time and he came explosively hard inside Fleur's young, supple body. Once his spasms stopped, he pulled himself out and wiped himself clean.

Elsewhere in the room, Bella was still tormenting Charlie and Thorfinn didn't think he could hold Charlie much longer. 'Just fuck him already,' he said impatiently.

'Patience, monkey,' said Bella softly. 'I'm getting to it.'

Rowena noticed she kept to her word. Bella didn't remove anything of her clothing, Rowena suspected she hadn't even been wearing anything under her black dress. They really did have everything planned. They lay Charlie on the floor and Thorfinn kept him pinned there while Bella placed herself on top of Charlie and she smiled manically as she guided Charlie inside her body. Charlie's hips bucked involuntary up. Bella squealed at the pleasure from it.

Rowena looked to others in the room. Amycus was pounding his sister against the wall. Rowena's nose crunched a little. How long had they been having sex together? She normally wouldn't care but incest wasn't an everyday thing. She considered siblings having sex was wrong but she didn't say anything. If it was there thing then who was to say it was disgusting. Not everyone agreed on the same things.

On the other side, Fenrir had bent Bill forwards over a wooden table as he brutally raped him. Bill held onto the sides for support, both hands were white from the strain. Bill made no sound. He kept his

eyes on his wife as much as possible. When Bella finished with Charlie she kicked him a few times for laughs and Thorfinn released him. Charlie remained slumped on the floor. He was tired from his fighting. He was grateful he wasn't touched by a male though. He felt sorry for Bill, especially for being raped by Fenrir.

When Fenrir was finished, he did the same thing as Bella, just shoved him aside. They approached Rowena and knelt down before her. She looked at them. She stood up and took a deep breath. She wasn't quite sure what to say.

'It was ... interesting, I'll give you that,' she said eventually.

The Death Eaters before her looked pleased. She nodded once. 'Take them back to cell and clean them up for tomorrow.'

She left the room with Walden following. The Death Eaters did as they were told. The prisoners looked around at each other. What was happening to them tomorrow? The pressure finally become too much for Fleur, whose tears fell from her bright blue eyes. She was ignored as they were placed back in their cells.

Once in the room Rowena sat on the bed. She looked round, Teddy wasn't here. She got up and went to the door but Walden stopped her. 'I'll check,' he said quickly.

Rowena sat on the bed and waited nervously. She didn't want Teddy to go see Madam Pomfrey and view his father just yet. It wasn't time. When Walden returned she stood up. He smiled at her as he approached. 'He's fine. He's sleeping in her office. He didn't see Lupin,' he said quickly, but quietly.

Rowena nodded and sat back down on the bed. Walden sat beside her. Rowena felt his hands on her. She closed her eyes at his touch. It felt nice. He rubbed her back and his hands slowly moved down her body. Rowena kept her eyes close. She felt him move and she suddenly felt something close to her. She opened her eyes faintly and Walden was there.

He moved forwards and kissed her softly. Rowena hesitated, wondering if she wanted this right now but she gave into him anyway. She normally did. She didn't normally let people but he was different. He treated her different and he saw her differently. It was in a light that Rowena liked.

She moved on the bed and Walden pulled her onto his lap. She placed her arms around his neck and she held on. Walden took his wand and whispered a spell, removing all of their clothes. Rowena ignored it and grinded her hips into his. He groaned at the contact and pulled her in for a deep kiss, which Rowena accepted. She ran a few fingers through his black hair. His hands moved to her back and pulled her closer.

Rowena moaned softly when Walden moved back gently and entered her body with ease. Rowena held onto him tighter. They had never done it with her sitting in his lap. She liked this position. It was very sexy and it felt very intimate. It didn't take long for Rowena to release. She cried out Walden's name and he helped her ride through the pleasure. He continued rocking their bodies together and once Rowena was finished he released his own control and came inside Rowena.

She remained on his lap for a little longer. She kept holding onto him. She felt safe with him. She had never really felt safe with anyone. She rested her head on his shoulders and steadied her breathing. Walden gently stroked her hair.

In the morning when Rowena woke up she immediately looked to the other side of the bed. Walden wasn't there. She quickly got up and showered and changed into clean robes before going downstairs. On the way down, she thought about last night. It had been nice. She couldn't remember the last time she ever felt like that but she wasn't sure if she ever wanted to see a show again.

She entered the living room and looked around. All prisoners were there and ready to go. They were standing in a single line. They looked back at her. 'You're just going to let us go?' asked Charlie.

'Yes,' replied Rowena simply.

‘Why does this feel like a trap?’ said Bill bitterly.

‘I don’t care what you feel,’ said Rowena sharply. ‘I’ve decided to let you go back to your families. You should be grateful. My friends here wanted to kill you. Be lucky I’m nice and forgiving.’

She walked to the front door and a few of the Death Eaters made them follow. She opened the front door and she let them walk out. She was sure most of them were expecting to be killed in any second but it was not going to happen. Once they were far enough away then turned back. They could see nothing. They all frowned. Where did they just come from.

Rowena nodded to Walden and he threw their wands to them. To the others, they seemed to come from nowhere. They picked them up and disappeared instantly. Rowena smiled to herself. They disappeared back inside and they met in the living room.

Later that night, Rowena said a long goodbye to Teddy before taking him to the medical room. As soon as Teddy saw Remus, he ran over to him and jumped into his father’s arms. Nothing was said between them for a while. Remus held Teddy tighter than he ever had before. He felt so relieved to see his son again and alive, no doubt.

He looked to Rowena. A part of him was grateful that he looked out for him but the other part was angry that she had taken him in the first place. Rowena left the room and went down to the front door. As soon as Remus was ready he joined her with Teddy. Rowena got another hug from Teddy before Remus took his hand again and Rowena opened the door with his wand.

‘Can I have mine back, please,’ he said softly. ‘I will not use it. I just want to go back home,’ he added, so quietly that only Rowena could hear.

She nodded her head once and she withdrew Remus’ wand and handed it to him. He nodded his thanks and a small understanding passed between both of them. He walked out the door and they disappeared quickly. Rowena sighed and her eyes lingered on the



spot where Teddy had just been. She then joined the Death Eaters back in the living room. She looked around. They all appeared worried.

‘What’s wrong?’ she asked, looking around again.

‘Draco’s gone,’ said Bella, her voice tight.

‘What do you mean gone?’ asked Rowena, frowning lightly and moving further into the room.

‘We mean, he’s gone,’ said Walden walking to her side. ‘He has not been seen since the last meeting and we don’t think he’s coming back.’

Rowena sighed inaudibly. The Death Eaters looked around at each other. They didn’t understand. ‘What does this mean?’ asked Bella moving closer as well.

Rowena sighed again inwardly. ‘It means we can longer stay here.’

## Chapter Thirty-Three - A Surprise Letter

The whole Order were sitting down in the kitchen of Grimmauld Place, attempting to find something to use against Rowena but the task was becoming more difficult than it should have been and most people were now or were becoming grumpy and irritably.

Albus was sitting at the head of the table and McGonagall was sitting on his left. She hadn't said much during the entire meeting, neither had Molly or Arthur. Molly still hardly spoke to anyone about anything anymore. Most of the meeting so far had been just Severus going over his report. He preferred to work alone and Albus allowed him to.

He trusted Severus. There was no way he would work for Rowena. When they had last spoke alone, Severus had told him that he was surprised Rowena had lasted so long but he had to admit that Walden was protecting her and it meant Rowena wouldn't have to do much herself. The Death Eaters could just do it for her. His report just contained people he spoke to and what he learnt from them, which wasn't much.

Albus sighed inaudibly so no one could hear. He was starting to agree with Moody, not the part about killing Rowena, but the part about that they should be out there looking for her instead of having meetings all the time. The meetings never seemed to get anything accomplished, well; their searching never seemed to get much done either. Albus had to agree with Severus too on the fact that Rowena had lasted this long. Albus thought she would have been easier to take down without her father around. He and everyone else had underestimated her.

He looked around at other people. The other Weasley's were quiet too, George particularly. Albus couldn't imagine what it would be like to lose a twin, a sibling he knew, but he was sure it was different with twins, that there was something more there between them. Ginny was sitting beside her mother, staring at the table. Albus knew she and Harry were no longer together. It was a shame. He thought they were good together.

He moved on and his eyes found Hermione. She was sitting beside Sirius. Lately, Hermione didn't really talk to anyone either. He had heard through McGonagall that there was something between her and Remus. It shocked him. It wasn't the age difference; it was more that there were any feelings at all.

He looked further down the table. Most people were looking down, or at their hands or at Severus as he continued to talk. Albus couldn't help but question himself over how much longer this was going to last. He sighed again to himself.

The more he thought about Rowena, the more he knew he didn't want to kill her. It was true. He still loved her. She was like the daughter he never had and Rowena had been right about him. A part of him did want to replace Ariana with her but he knew it wouldn't happen. Besides, Rowena was a much different person to his sister. He had wondered many times what his sister would have been like had she lived and had the Muggle boys not hurt her.

Suddenly, Severus stopped talking and turned his head to look at the kitchen door as did a few other people. Albus hadn't noticed anything. There was another sound and this time, most people stood up from their seats. Albus joined them. Most people stood out their wands and Albus led them out of the kitchen. When reached the hallway he stopped in surprise.

Bill, Charlie, Fleur and Hannah stood before them. The people behind Albus stopped too. Molly moved closer to her two sons. Her eyes were wide and her face turned whiter than it was before. She was about to move to them quickly but Arthur grabbed her arm. She tried to yank herself away from him.

'W-what are you doing?' she asked angrily.

'We need to make sure it actually is them,' said Arthur slowly. He couldn't tear his eyes away either. He really wanted it to be them.

Albus moved closer and waved his wand casually, disarming the people in front of him. He then approached them and checked them with his wand thoroughly. He turned back to Molly and nodded. It was

them. He turned back and smiled at them. He had many questions for all of them, Hannah especially; she hasn't been seen in years.

Molly yelped in delight and she ran to her sons and daughter-in-law and hugged them all. When the celebration ended everyone went back into the kitchen. The four that returned sat together. Fleur held Hannah's hand tightly. Hannah was the most nervous looking one of the four. She appeared scared and disoriented.

Before the questions started Severus checked them over and gave them all a healing potion, just to be safe. He looked to Albus as he spoke. 'They're fine. They've all been abused, Hannah mostly, but none of them are hurt too badly and they're shaken but with food and water I'm sure they'll be fine for questions.'

'Thank you, Severus,' said Albus softly.

Severus nodded to him and sat back down in his place. Molly made herself busy in the kitchen, cooking for them but some people had questions already.

'Is Teddy there? Is Remus there?' asked Tonks hurriedly.

'I think so,' said Bill, after some thought. 'But we never saw him. I thought I heard him once in the cell corridor.'

'Cell corridor,' whispered Ron softly.

'What did he say?' asked Tonks quickly, leaning forwards in her chair.

Bill thought hard to remember. He repeated Remus' words exactly. 'What are you doing? Rowena, please ... please, don't do this. It's exactly what he said.'

Tonks shook in her seat slightly. 'Do you know what happened?'

Bill shook his head solemnly. 'No, sorry,' he said quietly.

Tonks nodded her head slowly, unaware that people were staring. She stood up from her seat, ignoring the tears that fell from her eyes.

She left the room and disappeared upstairs into a spare room. All she wanted right now was to be alone. She couldn't handle anything else right now. That news alone had almost ripped her heart out.

She sat down on the small single bed and pulled her legs up to her chest and rested her head on her knees. She continued to let her tears fall. It didn't matter anymore, nothing mattered anymore.

Back in the kitchen, the four that returned began to eat quickly. Once finished the questions quickly started. 'What happened?' asked Harry quickly.

'Which part do you want to know?' asked Charlie bitterly.

Molly touched her son's arm but he moved away shaking his head. He couldn't bear being touched right now. Bill looked at his brother. He was surprised. He decided to answer all the questions he could himself. He sighed and thought through his words before speaking.

'All of us were raped,' he confirmed. 'Not all by the same people, well, Hannah I'm not sure, but ... it happened last night. We all saw it happen to each other. We were in all in the same room. Rowena watched, along with Macnair, he's the Death Eater protecting her. A couple other Death Eaters watched too.

'We were kept in cells. They were horrible. They were dark, you were lucky to see any light, and they smelt horrible. After the rape, we were placed back in our cells. We shared a cell in the beginning but it changed after a few days.

'I cannot speak for Hannah, but the three of us weren't tortured.'

Bill stopped talking. Everyone took it in. Albus then turned attention to Hannah. He smiled kindly at her. He didn't want to pressure her at all. 'Miss Abbott, I know you've been through something extremely unpleasant but is there anything you could tell us?'

Hannah nodded slowly. She had been there the longest. She was dirty and her blonde hair no longer looked blonde and her skin was covered in dirt and grime. Hannah rubbed her face with a dirty hand

and rubbed them together nervously before speaking. This was the first time she had eaten properly and she was willing to talk if it got her to a bed and shower quickly.

'I know I've been there for years,' she started slowly, her voice cracking every now and then. 'I thought I was going to die there. I was raped by many of the males there, more than once by most of them, and it happened more times than I can possibly remember. As far as I am aware I was the only female there after one of the battles. Why they didn't get more, I do not know.'

'I remember only having one conversation with Rowena, and that was when her father was alive. She was the one who stopped me from being killed. At the time I wasn't sure if that was a good thing or not. I don't think there's much I can tell. If I wasn't with a male Death Eater, then I was in my cell. I was never allowed outside and the food I was given could hardly be called food but I was always given clean water. I'm pretty sure Rowena made sure I drank well and stayed alive.'

Hannah went quiet. It seemed to become too much. Her hands covered her face and she succumbed to tears. Molly gave Albus a reproving look and he sighed and nodded his head slightly. Molly took Hannah upstairs. The meeting ended there without another spoken word.

Hours later, the door to Grimmauld Place opened again and no one seemed to hear it. Remus walked through the door, still holding his son's hand. They walked down to the kitchen but no one was there. He frowned faintly but decided to look in the living room. There had to be someone here. They walked to the living room together and stopped in the doorway.

It took a few seconds for someone to notice but once it happen the gasps spread around the room like a disease. Most people stood up and stepped closer, as though making sure they were really seeing the man in front of them. Harry, Hermione, Sirius and Albus stood up. Albus was the one to approach Remus and Teddy. He took out his wand and check them both.

Once done, he stepped back, his face still showing surprise. 'Remus,' he said quietly. 'Merlin, what happened?'

Remus smiled for the first time in a long time. He stepped further into the room and looked around. He couldn't see Tonks anywhere, but his eyes did find Hermione, but he didn't linger on her. He knew he loved Tonks and it was going to stay that way. He would not tempt himself again, with thoughts or actions. Tonks deserved better than that.

Hermione looked down once Remus looked away. She understood the message he sent. Nothing was going to happen. She looked back up when she felt the small heat leave her cheeks. Teddy was smiling at everyone. He seemed most happy to be back with people who loved him. It didn't take long. There came a small creak behind them.

It was Tonks. She had come downstairs to see what was going on. She heard noise before and she thought it had suddenly become too quiet and she wanted to see why and now she knew. Her husband and son were standing in front of her. Teddy let go of Remus' hand and ran to his mother. Once reaching her, he wrapped his arms around her legs.

Tonks steadied herself from her son's blow. She was still staring at Remus. Her blue eyes widened. She was stunned. Was this real? Was Remus really standing before her? Was her son really holding her legs? She looked down and saw her son's now blue hair. More tears spilled from her eyes and splashed onto her weird sisters' shirt.

She moved as quickly as she could and fell into Remus' arms with Teddy still attached to her legs. Remus caught her easily and wrapped his arms around her tightly as everyone in the room looked on. Remus didn't care right now. He was just happy to have his family back and together.

When their hugging finished the three of them sat on a lounge together. Tonks was having trouble wiping the smile off her face and looking away from Remus. She could hardly believe it. Albus and the others continued to watch them.

'What happened, Remus?' asked Albus when things settled down.

Remus was still smiling, despite what he went through. It was worth it just to see his wife and son together again. He looked around the room again and he settled his eyes on Albus. There were things to discuss.

'Rowena let me go,' he said simply.

'She what?' asked Harry. He almost sounded outraged. 'Why would she do that?'

Remus shrugged. 'I don't know,' he said quietly. 'But something has changed. She doesn't seem the same.'

'How?' asked Albus.

Remus shrugged again. 'I don't know,' he repeated. 'She just seems different. I don't think she's planning to stay around but like I said I'm not sure. She could be planning anything right now.'

'She won't leave the country,' said Albus shortly.

'How do you do that?' asked Moody gruffly.

'Because she cannot,' replied Albus simply. 'We've made sure she cannot leave again. She's stuck in this country whether she likes it or not but Remus, please, continue. Did anything happen to you there? Judging by what Bill heard you say we thought you may have been killed.'

Remus shook his head. 'No, but Rowena did let Greyback have some fun.'

Tonks gasped loudly but Remus shook his head, trying to dismiss whatever thoughts she was having. 'No, it was nothing like that. She explained her reasons.'

'Which were?' asked Harry indignantly.



‘After Teddy was taken Greyback wanted him because he wasn’t a full transforming werewolf and he had every intention of changing that,’ said Remus heavily. ‘But Rowena wouldn’t let it happen. Twice, she saved him and since then she protected him. It even got bad enough that Greyback attacked Rowena, she wasn’t seriously hurt though.’

‘It doesn’t change the fact that she had him at all,’ said Tonks crossly.

‘I know,’ said Remus softly. ‘But I am grateful that she let no harm come to him, that she protected him, even though she hates me.’

‘Do you know where her hideout is?’ asked Harry after a few moments of silence.

Remus shook his head. ‘No, unfortunately, she’s been keeping it quite secret. We never saw the outside of it, even when we were released. I wasn’t quite sure of the location either. It seemed to be a forest of some kind and it seemed pretty large too but I’m just guessing.’

‘It’s better than nothing right now,’ said Albus encouragingly.

When the talking ended, Tonks dragged her husband and son to the kitchen happily. They needed to eat and then get some sleep. There was still much to be done with the Order and Tonks was sure there would be another meeting tomorrow.

In the morning, there was another meeting but something had changed. Everyone was quiet and unsure of what should be done next. In front of Albus lay an open letter. It had been hastily written and there were a few blood smears across it. None of them knew what to make of it.

‘Read it again,’ said Harry quietly. He needed to hear it again.

Albus cleared his throat and began to read:

I am writing this to the Order of the Phoenix. I am Draco Malfoy. I am writing this to you in search of help. I was a Death Eater under the

command of the Dark Lord and then his daughter, Rowena. I will not lie; I did join them by choice and in most cases I would choose the same again but things have changed. I no longer wish to serve her. I believe her methods and actions to be unwise and I think it best if she was brought down by you. I am sorry for the deaths or injuries I have caused any of your people. None of them currently know where I am and I am only praying that you find me first. I have enclosed the address of where I am and I beg you to come in a small group. This is no trick or trap; I really do want and need your help.

Draco signed his name at the bottom hastily. That was the third time Albus had read it through and still, no one knew what to say, except for Moody. 'It must be a trap,' he said loudly.

Out of everyone here, Harry was sure he knew Draco the best. 'I don't think it's a trap,' he said lightly. 'I know Draco hates me and most people here but I don't think he would write to us unless he actually wanted help. I don't think any of them would stoop that low.'

'I agree,' said Kingsley in his deep, low voice. 'A few of us should meet with him if he's there and talk with him quickly. We could send back up, which could look out for us and the first sign of trouble, could come in and help.'

Still, no one was sure about this. Helping a known Death Eater could be bad for them; it could turn out to be a trap and quite a good one if it was. Albus knew that Rowena knew about his helping nature, maybe she was using it against him.

'I think we should meet with him,' said Albus decisively. 'He says he will be at the remains of his old home in two night's time and we shall greet him, cautiously.'

It seemed as though no one else had a say in what happened. Albus had made a decision and it was obvious that it was the end of that conversation, but not everyone was happy to go along with it.

'I know what Malfoy's like,' said Harry, almost angrily. 'I don't think he would willingly to help us just because he was unhappy with the way Rowena was running things.'

'I agree with Albus,' said Severus softly. Harry glared at him but he didn't notice anything. 'I know Malfoy as well and he doesn't strike me as a great planner and I think if it were a trap than Rowena would probably use someone better, someone who could actually act and pretend that something is wrong. The letter was done hastily and I know that Malfoy's handwriting does not normally look like that. I think it's genuine.'

Albus seemed happy that at least one person agreed with him and that alone had made his mind even more determined to go through with this. He was so sure that this was the thing they had been waiting for to take Rowena down. This was the thing that was going to help them.

Two nights later, the Order set out for the remains of the old Malfoy Manor. When there, they scanned the area but no one but them were around. Albus told them to wait in their positions until he was sure of what was going to happen. He didn't want anything bad to happen but he was sure that this was what they needed right now. They needed a way to bring Rowena down and he was sure this was it.

A small rustling sound appeared not far from them but nothing came of it. Everyone held their wands at the ready, waiting for something to happen any second. Albus stood with Severus near the front of the manor. They were both in plain view and could be seen by the rest of the Order that were waiting and watching. Albus knew nothing bad would happen and he knew Severus shared the same thought.

He looked to Severus. The tall man had his head turned the other way, looking down the other end of the street. He was a good man, whether he knew it or not. He had sacrificed everything to help him and the Order and he was grateful. A part of him was just sad for Severus that it was not yet over, but at least he no longer had to pretend to be on the other side.

Another rustling sound came and this time a shadowy figure could be seen walking towards Albus and Severus. Only Severus noticed it. He nudged Albus with his elbow while keeping his gaze on the figure.

Albus turned his head and looked in the same direction. Of course, he could see it too.

The figure appeared to be alone and Albus was sure it was Draco. The figure came closer, though very slowly. When light finally shined on the person, they could see it was Draco. He seemed surprised to see they had responded to his letter. He thought he would be ignored and that he would have to flee the country or something, but with the Order's help he wouldn't have to do that.

He walked closer to Albus and Severus. He was having trouble believing that there weren't more Order members around. They would come here alone, not without more people watching out for them. Draco had expected this. He didn't expect any trust but he had told them the truth. Rowena and the Death Eaters didn't know he was here and he hoped they wouldn't know until it was too late.

When he was almost a few feet from the two men, Severus held a hand up, indicating for him to stop. He ceased his walking and looked them over. Severus appeared to be well. Draco wasn't surprised. The two men stared back at Draco. Severus was surprised.

Draco looked paler than ever and his grey eyes had turned dull and vacant. His black robes were nice and still intact but his black shoes looked scuffed harshly. He was not holding his wand.

'Thank you for meeting me,' he said inaudibly.

Albus nodded his head politely at Draco before speaking. 'You have things to tell us?'

'Yes,' said Draco, nodding. 'Rowena and the other Death Eaters are holed up in a place near the edge of the country, on a map I could show you the exact spot. It's not visible until a few feet from it. You have to keep thinking that it's there or it won't appear.'

'Most of the Death Eaters listen to her, mainly Macnair; he hangs on her every word.' A small looked passed between Albus and Severus, but went unnoticed by Draco. 'She wasn't a bad leader, but she's making too many mistakes....'

‘So, you're going to betray her? That's your answer?’ asked Severus, harshly.

‘Do you disapprove?’ asked Draco, but he didn't want for an answer. ‘I'm not just doing this because I think she's making mistakes... my parents are having another child and I do not want the child to be born into this.’

‘Your mother's pregnant?’ asked Severus, his voice going soft.

Draco nodded. ‘Yes, I found out not long ago,’ he said quickly. ‘I wasn't happy about it but my mother is and I want her to be happy and I think she deserves to have this baby safely and not during a war. The baby doesn't deserve it either. I know my father won't approve of me coming to you but I know he doesn't want anything bad to happen either.’

‘Is this in any way a trap?’ asked Albus suspiciously.

‘No,’ said Draco firmly.

Albus nodded once and with his wand he sent a signal. It was for all members to return to headquarters. They were heading back to and taking Draco with them. ‘Let us go,’ said Albus kindly. ‘I do not think it would have taken Rowena long to figure out you're missing, so, you should not be seen with us nor do I think you should be seen at all.’

Draco was surprised he was going to their headquarters but he was thankful. He didn't know if he would be able to survive much longer without help.

When they arrived at Grimmauld Place they went straight inside and Draco was immediately disarmed, though he gave up his wand willingly. He wasn't here to fight with anyone. He was just here to help them bring Rowena down. If it was possible than maybe his family could get back to where they were and he could move on with his own life.

The door to the manor opened and the Death Eaters all trudged into the room looking downwards. Rowena sat in the living room with Walden beside her. She sent all Death Eaters out to look for Draco, well, all except Walden. He had to stay with her.

Once everyone was settled around the table Rowena immediately wanted to know what happened. She shifted in her seat before looking over at Lucius and Narcissa. They weren't looking back. They both stared at the wall opposite them, both their faces blank and expressionless.

'Well?' asked Rowena once things went quiet.

'We found nothing, my Lord,' said Bella unhappily. 'Well, we found Draco once but he evaded us very quickly. We hardly had any time to react.'

Rowena nodded. 'He's probably gone to the Order.'

'What makes you think that, my Lord?' asked Amycus quietly.

'Because he would need help,' said Rowena distantly. 'He won't be able to disappear by himself. I say we leave him and we need to leave the manor and find a new hideout.'

'Why?' asked Walden, leaning forwards in his chair.

'Because if he went to the Order then he's going to tell them where we are and we cannot have that,' said Rowena, her voice rising.

'Where will we go?' asked Bella.

'I do not know,' said Rowena quietly. 'We shall set up coordinates for just in case purposes. If we must flee then we flee to that place. And if that doesn't work then I suggest we leave the country and flee to my old school. I will tell you all where to go.'

Everyone around the table nodded. Rowena didn't know what else she could do. At the moment, everything felt like a lost cause. She

ended the meeting quickly but on her way up to her bed chambers, she stopped. There was a small rumbling outside. It couldn't be.

She went back down the stairs and Walden went with her. She opened the front door and looked out. There was no one around. Rowena frowned. Something was happening. They had to leave quickly.

## Chapter Thirty-Four - Return to Durmstrang

It was now the eleventh of February and Rowena and her followers were just about ready to leave the manor. She wanted to leave earlier but things didn't seem to be going right at the moment. They piled out of the manor onto the grass out the front.

Rowena had finally managed to set up the coordinates of another location in case things went bad. She had planned on it being different but she knew a forest would provide better cover and it was on another side of the country, so Rowena thought it was a pretty good choice but she knew England wasn't covered in forests and that they would soon run out if they continued to be on the run in this country alone.

Rowena was the last person out the door and she stood back as she tore the manor down with her wand. She jumped slightly as another rumbling sound was heard. She knew it was the Order, they were here, looking. The noise has been getting louder and closer for the last few weeks. Rowena was surprised it was taking them this long to find them.

Just as they were about to disappear they were interrupted by a flurry of spells. Alecko jumped and yelped as spells flew their way. Walden jumped in front of Rowena and covered her. Another round of spells came through and this time hitting Avery and Paul Harper.

Rowena didn't know what to do. They couldn't see where all the spells were coming from or who was sending them. Well, she knew it was the Order but none of them could be seen right now. They were sitting ducks and everyone seemed to be in panic mode. Rowena pulled herself together.

'Everyone leave!' she shouted. 'Disappear to the coordinates I sent. We aren't going to win here. Leave!'

Rowena and Walden were the first to disappear and she was sure she heard others do the same. When arriving, Rowena stood up and quickly checked her surroundings. There was no one else here but



within a few more seconds more people disappeared, arriving at the same place.

Rowena did a head count. They had lost three people back there. She swore under her breath and looked around herself again quickly. Albus had found her and she knew it was because of Draco. She looked to his parents. They were standing away from everyone else.

Something inside Rowena snapped. She held her wand tighter, which made her hand turned pure white and she stormed over to the Malfoy's. Lucius made to protect his wife, which didn't matter, it wasn't Narcissa she wanted.

'Avada Kedavra!' she shouted, pointing her wand at Lucius.

Life quickly left Lucius' body and he fell to the ground in a muddled heap. Narcissa screamed and fell to her knees. She sprayed her body over her husband's and she let her tears fall freely. Rowena's face still etched in anger, she looked to Narcissa, who finally looked up in fear.

'I'm not going to kill you,' said Rowena through her teeth. 'But I want this to be a lesson for your traitor son. This is his punishment for defying me. He forced my hand and the blood is on his.'

She walked away, the Death Eaters in her path almost tripped over themselves as they moved to make room for her to pass through. They had never seen that anger or determination in Rowena before. It seemed she did get something from her father after all and only now was it being allowed to fully emerge.

Within a few more minutes, several more cracks whipped through the air. Rowena and everyone around her jumped. Rowena groaned and she moved quickly.

'We need to leave again, the Order have found us,' she shouted. 'Bella, remove the holding spell and then I suggest everyone disapparate to the next place.'

Bella smiled wickedly as she waved her wand around. A large bang went through the air and over the heads of everyone in the country. Rowena knew there was a holding spell that concerned her, it was the reason she could not leave the country and Bella happened to know how to remove one since she had to with her father, many years ago.

Once the sound disappeared everyone disappeared to the Durmstrang School. Rowena did another head count once they landed on the grounds. They were fine. It made her sigh in relief.

They all ran to the front doors of the small castle and they entered forcefully. Rowena, Walden and Bella all went to the headmaster's office. They broke the door down and strode into the room. Dobtcheff was still the headmaster. It made Rowena smile. He looked up at her in shock.

'H-how did you get here?' he asked shakily.

Rowena's head tilted faintly and a small frown appeared on her face. He knew she was on the run. He knew she would come here. Rowena mentally kicked herself. She looked her old headmaster over. 'If you want the students here to live then I suggest you get them out of here now, the teachers too,' she said quickly.

Dobtcheff didn't need telling twice. He moved straight to the P.A system and sent a message to all students and within half-an-hour the whole school was empty, besides the headmaster, Rowena and her followers. She wasn't going to hurt her old headmaster. She just wanted someone from the school to stay here, and besides, he offered and she wasn't about to pass that up.

They protected the school with more spells on top of the ones already there. Rowena wanted to make sure the Order stayed out. Rowena remained in the headmaster's office, as did Walden and Dobtcheff but Bella went to help the others. Dobtcheff looked at Rowena; he could no longer contain himself.

‘Why do this?’ he asked slowly. ‘You know Albus will never let you leave here alive. He will guard this place for as long as it takes to get you out or break in.’

‘I don’t care,’ said Rowena loudly. ‘I just want a way out of here and I’m guessing you’re the one that’s going to give it to me. I have no intention of being captured or killed.’

‘There is no other way out of here,’ said Dobtcheff loudly. ‘You should know that, you went to school here. I’ve seen you explore many times. Did you ever find something?’

Rowena bit her bottom lip. He knew he got her. Of course she never found anything. It was why she was asking if there was another way out of here. Rowena knew she hadn’t thought this through well. They were trapped in her old school and Albus and the Order knew she and the Death Eaters were here and now they were trapped. Rowena sighed angrily and she kicked the leg of Dobtcheff’s desk. It only creaked.

‘It was you that killed Baransti, wasn’t it?’ asked Dobtcheff calmly.

‘Yes,’ admitted Rowena, exhaling heavily.

Dobtcheff looked down in his lap. He was sitting on the floor against the wall opposite the door. Rowena didn’t want him to do anything foolish. ‘Why?’ he asked, pained.

Rowena sat down in his desk chair and she swung round in it to face him. Her light brown eyes had turned ice cold. Every time she thought about Baransti she felt the same feelings all over again. She wished he were still here, then she could kill him over again and feel that pleasure wash over her once more.

‘Because he was fool and he was extremely arrogant,’ said Rowena angrily.

‘Rowena, please,’ said Dobtcheff heavily. ‘Why kill him?’

‘He was inappropriate with me, he picked on me for no reason, which everyone seemed to ignore and the night last time I saw him was during a detention. He touched my leg, telling me I could be prettier if I tried. I hated him. I hated the way he made me feel. He was a pig, a parasite that needed to be terminated and that’s what I did.’

‘How did you do it?’ asked Dobtcheff, several moments after Rowena’s little story. He could hardly bear to hear all of this now.

‘You know how,’ said Rowena softly, still looking at him. A small smile started to appear on her face. She seemed proud of herself. ‘I poisoned him ... with aconite.’

Dobtcheff looked away. ‘Why not tell someone? Why not get help?’

‘And what would you have done?’ she asked angrily, rounding on him. ‘Nothing would have happened. It would have been boxed away and never spoken of again. I couldn’t let that happen and let him get away with everything. He deserved to die and I’m glad I was the one that got to do it.’

He didn’t want to hear any more. Rowena’s smile widened and she leaned back in the chair. After an hour had passed a voice boomed throughout the school, Rowena knew it was Albus’ voice. She turned to face the window and she could see him and the Order out on the grounds.

‘Rowena,’ the voice boomed. ‘You’re outnumbered. There is no way you can win this battle. Give up now and your lives will be spared.’

Hearing that angered Rowena. She stood up from the desk chair forcefully and it wheeled to the other side of the room and hit the wall. She threw the window open and leaned out. A spell came at her but it seemed to bounce off an invisible force. Rowena laughed.

‘Do you really think you can get in here, Albus?’ she asked tauntingly. ‘Come on, give it a try.’

There was another voice. ‘Come and get us,’ said Bella in a singsong voice.

Rowena laughed again and put herself back in the room. She looked to Walden and pointed to Dobtcheff. 'Make sure he doesn't leave. We have things to do.'

Walden tied Dobtcheff up with rope from his wand and he fell stiffly onto his side. Rowena left the office and Walden followed her. They walked the corridors checking everything possible. Rowena couldn't see any way the Order could get into the castle. Rowena checked on the other Death Eaters but everything was fine and nothing bad was happening.

Rowena and Walden returned to the headmaster's office and Rowena sat down at the desk again. Dobtcheff was still lying on the floor on his side. His eyes followed Rowena's movements. 'You're not getting away with this! You were such a good student.'

'Walden, make him be quiet,' said Rowena ignoring the man on the floor. She turned back to look out the window.

Walden did as he was told and he flicked his wand and Dobtcheff could no longer talk or make any sound at all. Another thought came to Rowena and she turned to face Dobtcheff again but she decided to let it go.

She turned the chair back to look out the window. The Order were still out there. Most of them were huddled in a group. Rowena watched curiously though she could hear nothing. They were probably discussing the best way to get into the castle. Rowena huffed but said nothing. Let them waste time. Talking about it wasn't going to help them here.

After a little while longer, Rowena was still looking out the window. The situation hadn't appeared to change yet. They seemed to still be discussing what they were going to do. Rowena sighed. Walden moved from his spot in the room and walked over to Rowena. He stood in front of her, blocking her view to outside. Her gaze was on his chest first but she gradually moved her eyes up to meet Walden's eyes. He was giving her a look she hadn't seen before.

Eventually, he got to his knees and gently placed his hands just above her knees. Rowena didn't move. She didn't understand what he was doing. He gently reached out and took her hand in his and kissed the back of it softly. It was then that Rowena understood.

'No,' she hissed through her teeth. 'Now is not the time.'

Walden got the message and he released Rowena's hand and moved back to his place in the room. Rowena soon looked over at him quickly. He was staring at her old headmaster, keeping an eye on him as he was told to. Rowena felt a pang of guilt in her chest.

'Walden,' she said softly.

He looked towards her, surprise evident in his face from her tone. Rowena got to her feet and gestured for him to come back over to her. He obeyed without question and stood before her. Rowena took hold of her wand and flicked her wrist. Dobtcheff's eyes were instantly covered with a blindfold and she quickly sent a buzzing sound to surround him so that no one could hear them.

Rowena touched his arms gently with her hands and rubbed slowly. Their eyes locked and Rowena felt her mouth turn dry.

'I'm sorry,' she whispered.

Walden frowned. 'For what, my Lord?' he questioned quietly.

Rowena licked her lips, thinking her answer through. 'For not being what you wanted me to be,' she replied. She knew it made no sense but this was new to her. 'I know I pushed you away many times and treated you like crap but ... you have meant more to me than anyone.'

Walden smiled at her words and brushed a strand of hair off her face before kissing her cheek lightly. A small smile graced his lips, making his eyes gleam brightly. 'That's always what I wanted to hear,' he whispered. 'Although, I will admit, you sounded pained admitting it.'

Rowena shrugged lightly. 'This is new to me, odd and scary. I feel foolish having any emotions besides, anger and rage. It hasn't been

me in a long time and this experience, with you, has opened my eyes.'

Rowena paused for a moment, still keeping her eyes on Walden. She exhaled gently. 'I just wanted you to know, if we don't make this, that I do care for you and my feelings are deeper than I will allow myself to admit.' Rowena swallowed hard. 'I doubt we're going to make this.'

Walden shrugged. 'My time with you has been worth it. My life under your father was pointless. Part of me regretted signing up in the first place but having you there after his death instead of a short life in prison was worth it.'

For the only time that Rowena could remember, she smiled a genuine smile. Walden returned it before crushing their lips together fervently. Rowena quickly opened her mouth and allowed Walden access. He plunged his tongue inside and danced alongside Rowena's.

Rowena broke the kiss and turned towards the window when a banging noise was heard echoing around the grounds. Rowena knew exactly what was happening. She looked outside again and noticed that something was different. Only a few Order members were on the grounds. She stood up and leaned out the window again. She wanted a better look. On the grounds she could only see Remus, Sirius, Hermione and Ginny. Where was everyone else?

Rowena shot out of her chair and turned to Walden. 'Have them search the castle,' she said quickly.

Walden nodded and was quickly out the door. Rowena turned on the spot in annoyance. She definitely hadn't thought this plan through. This was a bad place to come to. Rowena turned around sharply as a loud bang travelled through the school. Rowena knew it had come from the front doors. She leaned out the window but could not see anything.

She swore under her breath again and took out her wand. Walden grabbed her arm and looked at her confused. 'What are you doing?'

'I'm going to finish this,' she said firmly.

She pushed Walden away from her and stormed from the room, leaving him watching. She was annoyed and this war was going to end here, now, once and for all. Walden shook his head in despair and ran after Rowena. When she reached the entrance doors, she knew instantly that they Order were inside the castle. She didn't know how they managed it and right now she didn't care. She just wanted this over, no matter how it ended.

She looked out on the grounds but there was no one there. A sound was heard behind Rowena and she found herself faced with Ron. He was looking at her, angry. Rowena tilted her head, well; maybe he was more than angry. Rowena was the one to stop him beating on Hermione and she was involved in his brother's death and the capture of two other brothers. He had a few reason for wanting revenge.

'Going to run?' he asked.

'No,' said Rowena evenly. 'I plan on fighting right now to get all of you off my back.'

'You'll never win,' said Ron stubbornly.

'Maybe,' said Rowena indifferently. She raised her wand at Ron and he went to do the same but Rowena was much faster than him. 'Avada Kedavra!'

The green light rushed towards Ron and he crumpled to the ground, his wand landing away from his body. Rowena walked to him and stared down at his lifeless body. Walden, who hadn't been far, walked over. He let out a sigh of relief and looked at Rowena.

'You're lucky he's not too bright.'

'Are you saying I couldn't handle him if he was?' she asked, her eyes narrowing.

'No,' he said too quickly.



Shouting could be heard above and around them in all directions and Rowena sighed. 'We have to go help and it includes me.'

Walden nodded. Even though Rowena was fighting he still had every intention of making sure she wasn't killed in the process. She ran towards the noises that she could hear and she stopped after making it upstairs and turning a corner. There were two people duelling near them right now. She kept Walden behind her as she looked around the corner. Severus and Rookwood were duelling, and it looked fierce.

Severus slashed his wand viciously and Rookwood fell to the ground, his neck spurting blood. Rowena wrinkled her nose. Severus had cut his throat. Severus took a moment before moving and Rowena waited. When the time was right she moved noiselessly from round the corner and pointed her wand at Severus' back.

'Impedimenta,' she whispered.

The spell hit his back directly and Severus went down. Rowena smirked. He hadn't seen that coming. She walked over to him and looked down at him. He looked back. Anger spread throughout the lines on his face. Rowena just continued to smile and she went on her way.

The next people they encountered were Dean, Pansy and Marcus. A small thought went through Rowena's mind on if Pansy and Marcus were dating. It would surprise her if they were seeing each other. Not a pairing she would have picked.

She watched them duel Dean. They didn't seem to be faring better from it despite two of them and one Order member. Rowena shook her head in disgust. Why did her father let them join in the first place? Just for the sake of having more followers? Rowena muttered something incoherent under her breath. It wouldn't shock her if that was her father's thinking.

She watched as Pansy was blasted against the wall and Dean and Marcus seemed to let off a spell at the same time, each hitting the other. Dean fell to the floor skidding away from the others and Marcus just doubled over where he was standing. Rowena moved from her

position and walked over to them. She checked Pansy. She was alive. She then checked Marcus. He was fine too, but shaken. Rowena told him to take a minute and to make sure that Dean did not get back up.

They went up to the third floor and found Evan and Selwyn duelling with Sirius, Remus, Tonks and Aberforth.

Rowena grabbed Walden to stop him being seen by any of them. She wanted to wait and see what happened. Selwyn went down quickly but Evan fought back viciously. He threw a spell at everyone and eventually one hit.

Sirius cried out and fell to the ground. He was holding his side, but no one stopped to help him. He lay still and waited for it to end. He then managed to hit Tonks but he was quickly knocked out by Remus. He grabbed Tonks and hauled her to her feet and they began towards Sirius but within seconds Dolohov came running around the other corner and he quickly took the scene in before him and before any of them could react, Dolohov raised his arm.

‘Avada Kedavra!’

There had been a small commotion and Remus pushed Tonks out of the way and she fell on her front. The curse hit Remus square in the chest and he too fell to the ground but he died instantly. Tonks’ scream echoed the corridor and everything else seemed to stop. Tonks moved quickly and she picked Sirius up and they left together, Sirius limping along beside her.

Rowena and Walden moved. Rowena looked at the dead bodies in front of her. Dolohov was still there. He was kneeling beside Remus. He hadn’t bothered with Tonks or Sirius. Rowena approached too and when Dolohov noticed her, he bowed politely and went back into the battle. Rowena waited until he was gone before she knelt down on the ground and look upon Remus’ lifeless body.

Rowena tilted her head lightly. His eyes were still open. Rowena moved slowly and with her hand she closed his eyes gently. She didn’t like werewolves, but Remus was different. He tried to live like a

human, which didn't work either. Rowena bowed her head slightly. Why did she feel this way now? Did she actually care?

Rowena got up again and she decided to keep going with the fight. As she looked around the castle she and Walden couldn't find anyone else. Rowena frowned heavily. They just heard everyone fighting, what happened? They continued moving around the castle and eventually they came to the entrance doors again. Rowena hesitated. She knew something was wrong. She could feel it.

She left the castle and walked onto the grounds and Walden followed her. She looked around. The night sky was still shining bright with stars and no clouds were in sight. The wind had picked up slightly but it was nothing to be bothered with. Rowena took a deep breath and walked out further.

It didn't take long to see something, before her stood Albus and Moody. She approached but things happened too fast for her. Moody sprinted towards them at an impossible speed and Walden was swept into a duel with him. Rowena ducked but Moody didn't touch her. He was only after Walden, her protector.

Rowena moved a little closer to where Albus was standing. He was holding his wand but it was by his side. Rowena held her own too but she held it at the ready. She stopped thirty feet from Albus and they looked at each other. Albus' expression was unreadable.

Rowena had wanted to run away and she could feel her legs shaking but she would not give into him. She was going to stand her ground and fight him. But a large feeling of dread crept through her veins as she looked into Albus' eyes. She swallowed hard. She was about to die.

A/N: Chapter has been updated and edited.

## Chapter Thirty-Five - Defeat

'I don't want to fight you,' called Albus.

'Good,' said Rowena cheekily. 'So, put down your wand and you won't have to.'

'You know that isn't going to happen,' said Albus softly.

Rowena couldn't help but smile. Of course she knew it wasn't going to happen like that. She did know it would come down to her and Albus, though she had tried to avoid it. She came up against him once and she was lucky to get away.

As though reading her thoughts Albus spoke. 'You won't get away this time. Your tricks will not work again.'

'I don't know what you're talking about,' said Rowena feigning innocence.

Albus finally raised his arm but he didn't yet seem set on using his wand. His blue eyes searched the one woman in front of him. He wanted nothing more than for her to stop this and walk into his arms though he knew it was not going to happen.

Rowena tilted her head. Her feelings hadn't changed. She was scared to death right now but she didn't want to show Albus that. It was one of the last people she wanted to show weakness to.

'I know what you've done,' said Albus quietly.

'I still don't know what you're talking about,' she repeated, although she heard him clearly.

Albus continued as though he hadn't been interrupted. 'I know you killed your mother,' she said softly.

Rowena eyes narrowed as she looked at him. She opened her mouth to speak but Albus cut across her. 'And I know you killed your

Charms teacher.' Rowena just smiled at hearing that. 'And I know you killed Blaise Zabini, though we've been unable to locate his body.'

Both of Rowena's eyebrows went up at hearing that though. She hadn't killed Blaise. She let him go. How did they not know that? She tried to speak again but Albus beat her.

'Stop!' Rowena shouted as loud as she could. She had heard enough. 'I will admit that I killed Baransti, and guess what, I would do it again. As for my mother, it was an accident. I never meant to kill her and I did not, I repeat DID NOT kill Blaise. He is alive. I let him go, I helped him escape.'

Quickly, Rowena whipped her wand around her head and created a whirlwind of fire. Albus stepped back from the suddenness of it. Once the flames swirled high and were heavy with heat Rowena sent them Albus' way but he was ready for it, blocking the full gale of the flames up towards the sky and away from them both. Once they were all gone, Albus looked at Rowena, stunned. He didn't know she could do anything like that.

Albus tried something simple. He raised his wand and flicked it strongly. A large net shot out of it and Rowena jumped out of the way to avoid being wrapped in it. She fell to the ground but she got up immediately. Rowena then retaliated with a spell similar to a trip jinx. It missed Albus by metres. Rowena shook her head in annoyance.

'You know you cannot win, Rowena, give up now,' said Albus loudly.

'No,' she shouted back.

Rowena yelped as she was knocked off her feet, her wand flung from her hand. She panicked. Albus sent three stunning spells towards her. She managed to avoid all of them. She threw herself to the ground beside her wand and she picked it up and their duel continued.

It became fast and furious. Spells flew between them rapidly, it seemed like neither of them had time to even breathe. Rowena held her ground well against Albus, despite her age and lack of experience in duelling. Albus was still surprised by her.

The duel continued, becoming faster and faster. Rowena knew she wouldn't be able to hold on much longer. She reflected the last spell from Albus, stopping the fight between them. She was out of breath, but Albus looked as though he could go another round, or two. Rowena kept her eyes on Albus but she bent her middle and leaned her left hand just above her knee as she panted for air.

After about thirty seconds Rowena shot an unforgivable curse towards Albus but he blocked it easily. Her frustration got the better of her and she tried another. 'Avada Kedavra!' she shouted.

But Albus had expected it. He had already moved from his spot and had his wand stretched out. 'Stupefy!' he shouted in return.

The spell hit Rowena in the side and she went to the ground again, this time her wand remaining in her hand. Albus approached her cautiously and took the wand quickly and placed it in his pocket. He knew he hadn't stunned her properly because the spell hadn't hit her properly. Rowena groaned and Albus moved away. He sent the signal to the rest of the Order.

Slowly, Rowena opened her eyes and she gradually stood up. She looked around. Albus was standing closer to her. Panic exploded through her chest and she felt for her wand but it was gone. Her head snapped to the side as the front doors to the castle opened and the Order began emerging. Rowena didn't know the doors had even closed.

'You have my wand,' she whispered, looking at Albus.

He nodded solemnly. Rowena moved away from Albus and the emerging Order. Albus' wand moved slightly. He didn't want to hurt her. Once the Order reached Albus' side they looked at Rowena too. She knew it was over. Tears welled up in her eyes and she let them fall. It was then Albus decided to completely approach her. She was no longer armed. It was safe.

He stood in front of her and Rowena's tears continued to fall. She fell to her knees and looked at the ground. She sobbed. Albus stared

down at her. This wasn't the young girl he once knew. This one was lost and confused, a mess.

'Get up,' said Albus softly.

'No,' Rowena said stiffly, unmoving.

'Get up,' Albus repeated his tone stern.

Rowena eventually did as she was told and she got to her feet. 'Look at me,' said Albus quietly.

Again, Rowena obeyed and she looked up into Albus' blue eyes. His were warm and almost comforting but Rowena's were cold and blank.

Albus sighed resignedly. 'I'm not going to kill you. I cannot. I just want you to come peacefully.'

Rowena nodded. 'I will,' she said inaudibly, knowing that she would not be able to defeat him, ever.

Albus took her arm gently but firmly. 'Let's go.'

He led Rowena off the school grounds and the Order followed. Rowena noticed that some Order members had some Death Eaters with them, bound and gagged. They all eyed Rowena angrily, full of hatred. Rowena looked away and down at her feet. She concentrated on her steps.

Once leaving the school grounds, they disappeared back to London and they were taken directly to Azkaban. Rowena's eyes widened when she saw it. She didn't want to be here. She struggled against Albus but it was no good.

She held herself and her head hung down and she looked back at her feet. She kept her thoughts on something else until she knew she was away from everything. Rowena sighed jadedly, it was finally over. A few times on the way, she felt the burn of Albus' stare upon her. She had failed him once again.

When they entered the prison each captured Death Eater was thrown into a cell and Rowena was saved for last. She looked pleadingly at Albus but he did not budge. He personally opened the last cell and pushed Rowena inside. She stumbled slightly but quickly turned and faced Albus.

‘Albus, I'm sorry.’

Her tone was flat and indifferent. Albus just stared at her for a little while longer before he walked away from the cell door. Rowena slowly walked to the iron bars and reached out beyond them, but there was nothing there but air. She quickly went to the window and looked out. She could see Albus and a few Order members. She knew they were planning to leave.

Albus really was going to leave her here. ‘Albus!’ she screamed. ‘You’ll regret doing this. You won’t be able to live with yourself!’

Angry hot tears streamed down her cheeks and she watched as Albus disappeared and left. Rowena closed her eyes. There was a painful and burning feeling within her chest. She clutched at it and slid down the cell wall. A scream of agony came from her cell and echoed throughout the prison.

Members of the Order of the Phoenix returned to Grimmauld Place and they all piled into the kitchen. Some sat down and some remained standing. Albus was one person that sat down. He was tired and he knew all too well that he was too old for this anymore.

He was sad. Mostly because he had to throw Rowena into Azkaban and her trial would be in a few months. He never wanted it to end like this but he knew it was better than her ending up dead. The kitchen was quiet. No one really had anything to say. There was nothing left to say. A few members had been killed. Albus looked around the table. There were tears from most people in the room and most of them were silent.

‘I'm sorry to those of you who lost people you love,’ said Albus gently. ‘What we’ve been waiting for is finally here. It’s now over.’



‘Maybe,’ said Hermione softly. ‘But I’m guessing it’s not over for you.’

Albus understood what she was talking about. He nodded sadly. ‘Yes, of that I am certain,’ he said, agreeing with Hermione. ‘I always saw Rowena as the daughter I never had. She was special to me and she still is. I still want to help her but I am not sure how. She is strong-headed and usually once she makes up her mind, she won’t change it.’

Hermione gave him a small smile and Albus returned it. He looked down at his hands which were resting upon the table. He was much older than he used to be. Sometimes he wondered where the time went but on the other hand he knew he had led a long and good life, most of it anyway. He smiled faintly. He was sad about the people they lost but to him, their lives should be celebrated.

But most of the people lost, were too young to die. That was the part that got Albus. They were much too young.

The press and all officials at the Ministry were getting nervous. Rowena Riddle was being trialled today. It was now the thirteenth of April. The atrium had been cleaned out, no one but strict personnel were allowed to be there or any of place where Rowena would be going.

All the fire grates had been closed and locked down, except for one, which was for Rowena to arrive in. When a sudden fire engulfed itself from nothing in the grate, all Aurors standing around it stood with their wands pointing at it, at the ready. The fire turned green and after a few seconds, Rowena stepped through, flanked by two more Aurors.

Rowena looked around. Right now, her hands were chained together behind her back but for the journey here they freed her legs from the chains. It was one good thing about her cell; she didn’t have to be chained up in it. She could move freely, though the space wasn’t that large.

She counted at least nine Aurors standing in front of her, not including the two beside her. Her eyebrows went up a little. She was

surprised at how tight security was, just for her. Was she really that dangerous?

‘Get moving,’ said an Auror, poking her in the side with his wand.

They turned to walk but stopped again. Albus was standing in front of them. Their eyes met and Rowena struggled to look away. He pressed on her mind but Rowena felt unwilling to let go. It took a few more long moments but Rowena finally released her thoughts to him. They poured to the front of her mind as he looked through them.

Rowena’s body shook slightly and the Aurors around them seemed confused and unsure of what to do about what was happening. But they all knew that Albus was the one who captured her, so they let him continue.

When Albus finished he pulled out of her mind abruptly. There were some things there he didn’t want to see. He never thought Rowena would let someone touch her but she had given into him. He already knew she hadn’t actually killed Blaise. They actually did a search for him and learnt he was alive, living in his mother’s secret basement.

Rowena had told him the truth. And she had told the truth about killing her mother. He could tell it was an accident. He knew many people wouldn’t be able to tell, but he saw it. Albus nodded once and they set off again, Albus followed behind.

When they reached the court room, Rowena felt her chest became heavier. She didn’t want to go in there. The heavy black door opened and all of them walked through. The room was circular and there were seats all around the top. In the middle of the room was a single chair. Rowena was taken to it and forced to sit in it.

As soon as her bottom touched the seat, Rowena yelped as chains flew around her and secured her to it. Rowena looked up. In front of her was a panel of people, the Minister included. Rowena quickly looked away from them and she looked around into the circular stands instead. There were people from the press, families of victims, some other people and members of the Order.

Rowena snapped her head back to the front. She couldn't face them. Not now.

'Do you know why you are here?' asked Scrimgeour.

'Yes.'

'Speak louder!'

'Yes,' she said louder. 'I know why I am here.'

'We would have rather kept you in Azkaban but Albus Dumbledore insisted you have a trial. That you had a right to have one, but for all the lives you've taken, I'm sure this will not take long.'

Rowena's eyes narrowed. 'What about all the things....'

'Silence!' yelled Scrimgeour.

Rowena had literally been silenced. She tried to say more but nothing came out. Most people liked it but not everyone. In the stands Albus stood up and looked at the Minister. 'If you want a fair trial then let her speak,' he said firmly.

'Very well,' said Scrimgeour unhappily.

He flicked his wand and Rowena could speak again. She said what he wanted to say before. 'What about all the things I did to help and the things that were accidents.'

'You cannot kill someone by accident,' said Scrimgeour.

'Yes, you can,' retorted Rowena. 'I-'

'Let's get to your murders and you can argue them if you wish, alright?' he said mockingly.

Rowena's eyes narrowed further. This wasn't what she would call a fair trial.

'First,' said Scrimgeour. 'The murder of Professor Roger Baransti, Charms teacher at Durmstrang, do you deny killing him?'

'No,' said Rowena clearly. 'I would do it again.'

'Next, the murder of Isabelle Baylon, your mother, do you deny killing her?'

'No,' repeated Rowena, 'but it was an accident.'

Albus stood up and spoke before Scrimgeour could. 'Minister, Miss Riddle is telling the truth. I have searched her mind and found the memory of this killing. She had let her anger get the better of her and it resulted in her mother's death, although, I do have concerns about her remorse for it.'

'Do you regret it happening?' asked Scrimgeour quietly.

Rowena shrugged. 'I don't know,' she said back. 'Sometimes I regret it and sometimes I don't.'

'Fine,' said Scrimgeour. 'Next, we have the murder of Blaise Zabini.'

'I'm not dead,' called a voice from the stands. Everyone, including Rowena, turned to look at who spoke. Rowena had been about to protest, saying she hadn't killed him, that he was alive. Blaise looked down at Rowena. He seemed confused on his feelings about her. He looked at the Minister as he spoke.

'I was supposed to be killed,' he said clearly. 'The Dark Lord wanted me killed but he only wanted Rowena to do it. She tried but couldn't. I was tortured and play with while there but despite it all, I am happy to still be here, alive and if it wasn't for Rowena, I wouldn't be here.'

'I'm not saying I praise what she has done but it wasn't all bad and horrible things and I do not believe she is a bad person, misguided and headstrong maybe, but not bad. She concocted a plan to allow me to escape and I am pleased that it worked.'

Blaise finished speaking abruptly. Rowena felt there was more but he had stopped himself. Was there something else he wanted to say, perhaps just to her?

Scrimgeour just continued. 'Next, you are also responsible for the murder of Ron Weasley. Do you deny it?'

'No,' said Rowena quietly.

There was a sob behind her. Rowena knew it was Molly. She ignored it and waited for the rest. 'You are also responsible for the murder of Lucius Malfoy, the father of the person that betrayed you.'

'And that's why I killed Lucius. To teach Draco a lesson, one I hope he has now learnt,' said Rowena coldly.

'Next are the murders you are indirectly responsible for; Remus Lupin, Katie Bell, Emmeline Vance, Dean Thomas, Fred Weasley, Rubeus Hagrid, Seamus Finnigan, Lee Jordan, Terry Boot, Madam Pince, Madam Hooch, Hestia Jones, Alicia Spinnet and Marietta Edgecombe.'

'Why am I indirectly responsible?' asked Rowena, leaning forward as much as possible.

'Because if you hadn't of taken your father's place and done all this then none of it would have happened,' said Scrimgeour angrily. 'The people who joined you and died do not count here. They made the mistake in joining you in the first place.'

'So, they don't matter?' asked Rowena angrily.

'If they mattered to you then they might not be dead,' retorted Scrimgeour. 'You will be held accountable for those which are indirect even if you didn't actually commit the act yourself, because you were the catalyst for them happening at all.'

Rowena thought about protesting but she didn't. She kept quiet and after much more talk and discussion without her it was decided she would spend the rest of her life in Azkaban. Rowena felt down and

the weight on her chest became heavier but she said nothing. It's what she thought would happen anyway.

'If you would permit me,' said Albus, standing up again looking at Scrimgeour. 'I would like to take Rowena myself. An Auror could accompany us.'

'Fine,' said Scrimgeour shortly, before getting up and leaving quickly.

The chains around Rowena disappeared and Albus was quickly by her side. Rowena stood up and they both walked back to the fireplace, with an Auror following behind. Rowena bit her lip as they continued. She felt nervous being in Albus' presence. It made her feel like a young girl again.

When reaching the fireplace the three of them stepped in and the Auror threw some Floo powder inside. Green flames shot out and engulfed them and took them to the connecting fireplace. They reached Azkaban quickly and Albus took her back to her cell. Rowena entered without any trouble and Albus closed the door. Rowena turned to face him. She was happy to see him still here but he had things to say to her.

'A few people were injured during the battle at Durmstrang, including Luna, Molly, Moody, Cho Chang, Sirius and ... my brother.'

Rowena's eyes went wide. 'Is he alright?' she asked inaudibly.

'Yes, luckily,' said Albus softly.

The eye contact did not yet break. Rowena took a few steps back in her cell. She hit the wall quickly. She could sense something bad coming.

'I'm very disappointed in you,' said Albus harshly. 'You're no longer the girl I once knew and raised.'

Rowena could only nod in agreement and mutter, 'I'm sorry.'

Albus turned his back on her and he started to walk away. 'Albus,' Rowena said impersonally. Albus turned to face her again, his face unreadable. 'Just tell me one thing,' she said quickly.

'What?' he asked quietly.

'Why did my mother not have an abortion? Why did she decide to keep me?'

Albus sighed and he looked straight at Rowena as he spoke. 'Your mother didn't think you deserved to die just because your father raped her. She thought you could still live and have a good, normal life.'

Albus turned on his heel and left the prison. Rowena suddenly felt like an empty shell. She no longer had anything or anyone. Tears leaked out from her eyes and she collapsed against the cell wall. She slid down the wall and sat on the dirty floor. It was now completely and finally over. There was nothing left for her to do except sit and wait for death arrive.

A/N: Chapter has been edited and updated since original posting.

## Epilogue

As Rowena sat in the front garden of Godric's Hollow she looked towards the rose bushes. She remembered that once they were dead or dying when she last looked at it. Now they were full of bright red roses but soon, the weather was turning hot and dry and soon they would wither and die again, though Rowena knew that Albus could just re-grow them with a flick of his wand.

Rowena sighed and shifted her body weight around to become more comfortable on the bench. She looked down and took off her old shoes and stared at her socked feet before lifting her head again. She sighed again. Her life had become slow and boring. It was not what she had ever wanted. She was constantly tired from doing nothing all the time.

Suddenly, Rowena felt a small shiver run down her spine. She turned her head to the side and her eyes met with Albus'. He was watching her from the living room window. Rowena quickly looked away and back to the garden. She could no longer hold his gaze as she once could. It had become an extremely difficult and painful thing to do. Albus' looks to her had changed too. They had become distrustful and cold.

Rowena was now thirty-six years old. She had spent ten years in Azkaban but she was grateful to be out but it was hard having to stay here, especially when the person it's with does not love you anymore. Albus said before that he still loved her like his own, but every day it was hard to believe and accept. It bothered her, as did many things, but she never said anything. She still loved Albus, even after everything that happened between them.

When Rowena thought about Azkaban she usually shook violently. It was an awful and horrible place that she hoped to never lay eyes upon again. Every night was just a repeat of the last. The nightmares never seemed to end and it was the same ones over and over again. The visions and the darkness seemed endless. It was dark place but Rowena found a darker and scarier place in her mind.



The nightmare that haunted her was herself. She would look up to the ceiling and see herself there; crawling along the wall as though it was the most normal thing in the world. When reaching her, her figure would stop and twist its head around to face the floor and its yellow eyes would fixate upon Rowena's own. The rest was worse. It became like an insect. The nightmares were more violent but Rowena never thought about it unless she had to or if the nightmare happened again.

She no longer slept very well and her weight had plummeted dramatically. Azkaban took away the wanting of food also and the looks she used to have. Rowena knew Sirius had been in Azkaban and she knew that he found it the most horrible place to be and it had made him bitter. Rowena was a little bitter but she was more depressed and withdrawn. She knew she wasn't the same person and that she never would be again, and when she really thought about it, it was good thing.

She had done terrible things, though sometimes it had never seemed like it at the time. Rowena regretted some things more than others. She did end up regretting sleeping with Walden. She learnt not long after that she had become attached to him and not long after entering prison, she learnt she was pregnant, though she was unable to keep it. Albus wouldn't allow it.

She had been disappointed when she couldn't keep it but she knew she wasn't the motherly type. She had raised Teddy for four years but she knew it was different. Teddy wasn't hers and she wouldn't be around for the child, though that probably would've been a good thing. Albus said he wouldn't allow the Slytherin bloodline to continue and Rowena thought it a pretty good idea. The line seemed to cause nothing but trouble and troubled people.

Rowena did see Teddy again. A few times, actually. Albus allowed Rowena to see him, only if Teddy agreed and he did. He remembered Rowena from when he was younger and Rowena asked him if he remembered being scared and he told her that he was scared when around Greyback only. At the time, he hadn't felt scared with Rowena at all. He had trusted her and he was now glad he did.

She was the only non scary person around. It had made Rowena smile, though she was sad not to see him again.

Teddy told her how things were going. He said he missed his father greatly. Rowena had been unable to look at him when Remus was mentioned. It made Rowena feel worse to hear that Tonks had not yet recovered from Remus' death and Rowena knew she never would. Tonks would die alone.

Albus had told her things when she arrived back. Harry was head of the Auror department and he had married Hermione once they had sorted everything out. Harry sometimes wondered if Hermione's feelings for him were genuine but he couldn't imagine her faking it. Rowena knew they had three children together; the third one was still only a baby. Rowena hoped they were happy.

Ginny had eventually moved on and married Blaise though it took a while for her family to accept him. Bill and Fleur remained together and had three children, Charlie went back to his dragons, George married Angelina, Percy met a Muggle and fell in love and Arthur and Molly were still together, though Rowena knew she was still heartbroken about losing Fred and Ron.

Rowena thought to her own personal relationship. She had been allowed to see Walden one last time, though she only got to spend several minutes with him. She surprised herself when she cried a little before leaving. Albus watched the entire time.

Things at Durmstrang had returned to normal and Rowena got a chance to apologise to Doltcheff though Rowena wasn't sure if he accepted it. She never thought she would get that look from him. He had always been so kind to her.

The Death Eaters that escaped her fate were living low, including the Malfoy's. They had resurrected their manor and were living there once again. Narcissa buried Lucius quickly and she managed to get Draco back home. She decided to keep her baby and she had another boy. She named him Caelum Lucius Malfoy. Rowena hoped she was happy and at peace.

Now, Rowena spent her days in Godric's Hollow, unable to leave and unable to speak to anyone but Albus. He had her wand and it was on him all the time. Albus was always around at home now since retiring as headmaster of Hogwarts. He only recently retired, after he took her out of Azkaban. McGonagall was now headmistress and she seemed to fit into the role nicely.

Rowena sighed heavily and loudly. She constantly wondered if Albus would die soon but the thought of it scared her. When Albus dies she'll be here all alone. She still won't be able to leave or speak to anyone else. She'll remain here until her dying day and Rowena knew it was a long way off unless she ended it herself and to Rowena, it was nothing more than a depressing thought.

A/N: Overall am happy with story. Has been edited and updated a couple times. Flashback scenes are for the reader to try and get to know Rowena a little better though I am unsure if they help or not. Please Review.